The

COMMONWEAL

A Weekly Review of Literature the Arts and Public Affairs

FOUNDED BY MICHAEL WILLIAMS

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CONTENTS

THE WEEK		21
ON CATHOLIC PUBLICITY	*Michael Williams*	24
ALL ROUND RELIGION	*T. Lawrason Riggs*	26
PRELUDE TO WORLD REVOLUTION	*George N. Shuster*	29
ONLY AN INCIDENT	*Most Reverend Francis C. Kelley*	31
STEPCHILDISH (*Verse*)	*W. E. Farbstein*	32
THE CHANGE BEYOND	*Ralph Adams Cram*	33
MEDICAL ADVANCE	*James J. Walsh*	35
THE TWO YEARS BEFORE	*R. Dana Skinner*	37
INSIDE STORY	*Helen Walker Homan*	38
CAVALIER	*Grenville Vernon*	40
MEMORY OF THOMAS WALSH	*Mary Kolars*	42
THE DARK VIRGIN (*Verse*)	*Clifford Gessler*	44
VIEWS AND REVIEWS	*Michael Williams*	44
COMMUNICATIONS		45
THE STAGE	*Grenville Vernon*	47
THE SCREEN	*Philip T. Hartung*	47
WRITTEN FROM THE RIDGE	*Heywood Broun*	48
BOOKS OF THE WEEK		49
FIFTEENTH ANNIVERSARY		55
THE INNER FORUM		63

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Anti-War and also Pro-Peace

SEARCHING for something more positive than simply fear or distaste for war or a sweeping but futile condemnation of warmongers, a neutral is in danger of becoming too individualistic. It is rather fun figuring out personal solutions to the great troubles which England, France, Germany, the US and the rest ought to accept, but if one has an ordinary temperament one knows they won't be accepted. Communal effort is likely to be more realistic and is likely to have more effect. The Catholic Association for International Peace is one of the leading organizations still working for united effort to attain a real program: "In this present crisis in Europe, the CAIP holds that its threefold purpose remains: Help to keep the United States out of war; help to end war everywhere; and help the United States to join in building a just and peaceful world." "World organization for world justice and world peace" is its emphasis. The statement just published reflects the considered opinions of committee members from varied walks of life. The Association joins in the six-point program of the National Peace Conference: "1) Keep the United States out of war; 2) Initiate continuous commissions of neutrals to mediate a just peace; 3) Work for permanent world government as the basis of permanent peace and security; 4) Prevent exploitation of war for private gain; 5) Recognize and analyze propaganda to prevent warped judgments and unjust animosities; 6) Strengthen American democracy through solving pressing domestic problems and vigorously safeguarding civil liberties."

Organized Effort

Conscientious Objecting

IT LOOKS as though modern war inevitably involves conscription, certainly of men, probably of wealth. And conscription of men produces the conscientious objector. In the days of the "clubby" war of volunteeer-professional armies, no one heard of that peculiarly modern phenomenon. Today he is a compelling nuisance to men's consciences. The Quakers publish a thoroughly hard-boiled pamphlet which tells you just what to do, come the Selective Service Act. The *Atlantic* prints articles on the question in two successive numbers. *America* and the *Catholic Worker* take similar attitudes: that if the US enters the present war, Catholics should be CO's. Archbishop McNicholas of Cincinnati has said to his people: "Every Catholic citizen of this jurisdiction should weigh the question whether he can conscientiously participate in a war that is entirely unnecessary for us Americans, and which he regards as morally wrong."

Are Consciences Bound?

Since 1914 Catholic opinion has more and more tended on moral grounds to object to conscription of men. The successful campaign of Archbishop Mannix of Melbourne, Australia, against conscription in his own country, the passive resistance of much of the French Canadian clergy to conscription in Quebec during the War vividly emphasized this school of opinion. Yet in more recent months the Belgian hierarchy has strongly supported compulsory military training (Does that include conscription?) as a just civil obligation. Our own opinion is against compulsion; but the problem is far from simple. Catholic consciences, at least, are not bound in any such sense as Quaker consciences are bound, even with regard to the present conflict. There is one immediate job for all of us—to try to protect the right of the CO to be a CO. To resist statism even when it is dished up in the name of equality and—falsely, as we hold—democracy.

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The Root of All Evil

BUT CONSCRIPTING wealth is yet another matter. Of course if that means total—toothbrush and pyjama—socialization of wealth, the complete bee-hive society, where the very basis of continuing human dignity, a meagre competence for living, is removed from the disposal of *all* citizens, then such conscription involves the same moral problems as the conscription of men, for it is merely a way of effecting the same end—requiring men to sacrifice their consciences to the state. But no one seriously advocates such a policy in those countries where liberty is still regarded as a good thing. Conscripting wealth in such countries usually means that private profits are largely to be taken out of war and excess individual holdings (excess by any reasonable standard) are to be made available to the state. Here the moral ground is altogether different. It is a little difficult to conceive of a millionaire objecting for reasons of conscience to the state's using his resources in what the government conceives to be her hour of need. Yet is it too cynical to suspect that there would be more effective opposition to this than there is to conscription of man-power?

"Mine" and "Thine"

. . . *And After*

APART from considerations of principle, we are here and now confronted with a pretty example of the horrible cost of contemporary war. When a nation the size of France mobilizes an army of six million men, what happens to the national economy? Businesses cease to exist over night. A publishing house that formerly employed hundreds is reduced to a staff of fifteen. The milkman, the butcher, the baker go to the front; their wives are evacuated; their shops are closed. Now suppose that after nine weeks peace is proclaimed. Everybody comes back. Will businesses re-open? Will milk routes start up again just as they were before? Obviously they cannot. In addition to the cost of mobilizing, there is the cost of demobilizing—and then the cost of readjustment. All this is true, even if only a few thousand are killed and wounded. Some of the greatest, the most crucial wars of history have cost relatively less than it now costs to get ready—and then unready. And the cost is not only in wealth; it is a moral cost—the after-effects of fear, the restlessness, the weakening of human bonds and ties—all things that, themselves, lead away from self-government toward tyranny. And this is true not only of France, England, Germany but of their innocent neutral neighbors—Belgium, Switzerland, Holland. . . . Even, in a very minor way, of ourselves.

Bear Goes Over the Mountain

Consumers Cooperation and World Peace

THE WAY cooperative leaders in the United States are going at the war problem is a challenge to American religious bodies. These men, strongly imbued with the ideal —a Christian one—of the brotherhood of man, declare that cooperators should refuse to fight other cooperators. And there are 70,000,000 of them enrolled in 120,000 cooperative societies in 38 countries. This form of internationalism does not seem far enough developed yet, but it is building soundly for the future. A special peace issue of *Consumers Cooperation,* just off the press, says straight out that the present war is a conflict between economic greed and economic greed, between force and force, between fear and fear. American cooperatives, already feeling the war supply boom, are told to put aside whatever profits are due to war expansion so that they will be able to survive the pinch of peace deflation. The magazine lists effective anti-war plays suitable for production by local groups, and certain co-op peace pamphlets. This fall and winter hundreds of local peace discussion groups will be organized. In the long run cooperators set much store by international economic cooperation. They point with pride to the Swedish-Scotch-British lamp works just opened at Glasgow, the international ownership of the North Kansas City Cooperative refinery, the new international cooperative study center in London with courses planned in English, French and German.

Plenty and Brotherhood

Is There a Skilled Labor Shortage?

BETWEEN the Labor Department's Federal Committee on Defense Training and the US Employment Service it seems clear that for present needs there is not so much of a shortage of skilled labor as is generally supposed. Bringing man and job together would, however, entails considerable displacing. So many an enterprise is calling for more skilled workers. If the United States serves again as arsenal for another European war of 1914 proportions, or if we are drawn into war some other way, skilled workers will be at a premium. Both union opposition and company obstacles have held down the number of apprentices during the past ten years. It has taken a spirited national defense program to awaken interest in the problem. The committee is launching apprenticeship training programs in various plants, approving agreements whereby no pay is involved for the hours required for this training. Regardless of the motive, this means new opportunities for men hitherto held back by company or union restructions. Apprenticeship, however, takes three or four years. At our present pace of mobilization, semi-skilled workers will

New Interest in Apprentices

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have to be sandwiched in with fully-trained mechanics, or new machines requiring no special skills.

"Especially in These Days"

THERE IS a sense, of course, in which the Catholic is bound to emphasize the difference between his faith and the other faiths around him. To possess in their completeness the truths of salvation which our Lord and Saviour died to confer upon mankind imposes a sovereign obligation. No Catholic may be a minimizer or an indifferentist: he owes it to his Redeemer, to his own soul and, finally, to the souls of others who do not share, or who share only partly, his inheritance of truth to declare and defend that truth without equivocation. But it is one of the happiest circumstances of life in our country that, while it permits the free acknowledgement of profound religious differences, it has also made increasingly possible and natural the recognition of profound religious similarities. This does not veil the dogmatic divisions between faith and faith; but it does promote a charity which seeks the universal human denominator in all believers—and also tends to reveal the common body of truth in varying beliefs. It was evidently with this fact in mind that the Lieutenant Governor of New York, addressing the annual state convention of Baptists, urged upon that body a sense of their spiritual relation to other believers. Truly saying that "in the struggle to build American democracy, the ideals and purposes of all faiths have been identical in their loyalty," Mr. Poletti pointed out the irreligious nature of most attacks on our political institutions. "Democracy," he affirmed, "is a profoundly religious concept," and must be defended first of all by those who believe; they have a duty to make this defense a common cause despite their internal differences—"especially in these critical days. . . ."

For United Defense

The Farm Ladder Reaches Low

THE ECONOMIC CLASSIFICATION of Americans who work on farms is bewildering. Between the independent farmer owning his home and land clear of debt and the transient farm laborer there are dozens of steps. It is impossible even to know in all cases whether one step is above or below another. The October *Agricultural Situation,* published by the Bureau of Agricultural Economics, throws light on half a dozen of the farmer grades. The Farm Security Administration reports on the operation of the Bankhead-Jones Act: "Altogether, about 13,250 farmer tenant families should be living on farms of their own by June, 1940, as a result of the Bankhead-Jones program." But when the act was passed in 1937, tenants were increasing at the rate of about 40,000 a year. In another article, day wages for cotton laborers (1935: without board) are given to be: in the Texas Plains, $1.25; the Delta, $1.00; the Piedmont, $.55. In North Dakota at harvest time last year, 1,485 individuals interviewed had 3,367 farm jobs in the preceding 18 months. Year in and year out their earnings, of course, were miserable. The aristocrats of farm labor, "regular hired men," commonly received $30 with board in summer in the region, and $15 in winter. American attack on the farm problem has clearly been too exclusively from the angle of the farm operator. The hardest human problems arise far below that grade. It would seem wiser to approach from the extremes: try to make owning a farm a secure and "prosperous" advantage, prosperity being conceived in more terms than simply money income. But first work with all earnestness to create humane conditions and incomes for the mass at the bottom of the pile.

Approach from the Bottom

Two Kinds of Federal Spending

AMERICA is afraid of economic depression. The only method found since 1929 which has succeeded in raising employment and production is the way of federal spending. America is, of course, wisely afraid of government spending too, but at present objections to federal spending as such appear to be weakening. The country is moving toward federal spending for employment and production. At this juncture, renewed insistence upon relief and public works is in order. So far the government spending in the limelight has been purely military and naval. The Federal spending-economy would thus tend to be solidified into an armament-economy. But the question is not between, on the one hand, letting things go: cutting off all government priming, going through the wringer of privately conducted bankruptcy, permitting prices, wages, deficits to seek without obstruction disastrous levels; and, on the other hand, hitching our wagon to the planet (no fixed star), Mars. Assuming no desire to cripple legitimate defense, there remain about thirty million Americans who want more relief. The "senior citizens" cry loudly and not altogether sentimentally. Medical services remain tragically inadequate. Conservation of natural resources has hardly begun. Housing is still terrible. Land use has hardly started to be rationalized. The population is distributed between region and region and town and country after a pattern of primitive industrial madness. Every man knows public works which, if public money can be spent, ought surely be done to enrich public and private life. There is certainly no excuse for America to spend money on resource-exhausting, sterile armaments for lack of better projects.

For War And Peace

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On Catholic Publicity

The past, the present, the future of American Catholic journalism.

By **Michael Williams**

I HAVE BEEN asked by the editors of THE COMMONWEAL to write something for the fifteenth anniversary number on Catholic publicity. In doing so, I shall select a few points from the innumerable aspects of a highly complex and extensive subject which I hope may be of some interest to both the directors and readers of the paper as they face the difficulties and uncertainties, and also the great opportunities, of the present crisis.

In many ways, the first fifteen years of this journal's work has in spite of manifest shortcomings prepared its directors and its public for the far more thoroughgoing work which now becomes necessary as the great world crisis, long foreseen and discussed in these pages, actually and tangibly bursts upon the world in a fashion which none can help recognizing—world-wide war, and the world-wide consequences of that war in those countries not as yet drawn into the physical conflict. I may recall that in the first number of THE COMMONWEAL, indeed, in its first editorial, there was expressed a belief from which its editorial directors and many of its chief contributors thereafter never deviated, namely, that our nation was "troubled and perplexed by most serious and highly perilous problems, complicated by the fact that our nation must in one way or another play a leading part among the other nations of the world at a time when all peoples are facing a crisis graver than any recorded in the annals of humanity."

Yet in 1924, in spite of the Ku Klux Klan nuisance and other disturbances on the surface of our public life, those who judged the times from signs indicative merely of its material aspects, particularly its economic outlook, were far indeed from sharing or even giving any serious attention to what we, in common with many far better qualified critics, said in warning of the impending crisis. Indeed, our own pages, seeking to give expression, then as later, to many points of view, reflected something of the prevailing optimism, which was too superficial, as the future proved, yet which pervaded high economic and governmental circles and led most of the western world, and more especially our own country, into that tremendously advertised "New Era" of expansion and speculation and installment buying which preceded and led us all into the catastrophe of the world slump and world depression, the fruits of which are now the world war, and the world revolution.

Our first number published a summary account of "World Business" in which was stated the opinion that "without voicing an undue optimism, it is evident that many forces both at home and abroad have been merging . . . to effect greater moral and economic stability. We intentionally place moral forces first. They are not subject to statistical analysis; rather they shape statistics and give them their value and perspective." From this point of view—the review of world business—as our COMMONWEAL editorial writer concluded, all the important signs in our own country were favorable, and abroad it was the same story "except in Russia." Hence, "we would seem to be on the threshold of progress through a cycle of economic expansion."

How terribly this optimistic forecast was to be falsified needs little telling. On the other hand the constant preoccupation of the main opinions of our writers at that time, and continually thereafter, being based upon deeper and far more vital sources than the ups and downs of the business reports, have been completely justified. It is true that the insistence upon this note of warning that a basic crisis involving the whole world was gathering wearied some of our readers, and seemed mere abstract speculation to others. Moreover the equally constant, if generally very prudent, insistence upon the fundamental need for really thoroughgoing reforms of our economic and social system in the interests of social justice, in conformity with the teachings of the Holy See, while welcome to a minority of Catholic readers, became steadily more unwelcome to a large group of powerful and influential Catholics, to whom even mild criticism of the accepted economic system appeared to be "subversive," and a mere encouragement to the Communists and other varieties of the followers of Marxian socialism.

The general field

Since I am writing on a subject far wider than the special place in that subject of this periodical, although first of all—for many reasons—I am here concerned with THE COMMONWEAL, it is well to point out that neither when it was founded nor

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during its first years nor, I am sure, under its present direction, has THE COMMONWEAL ever regarded its work as being more than a limited participation in a vast general field of work embracing the whole Catholic press. Nor was it the only organ of that press which during the period covered by its own existence maintained the thesis that conditions in our own society, and in human affairs throughout the world, were so maladjusted and so affected by a spirit hostile to Christianity as to indicate a vast upheaval; and more particularly pointed out that the denial or the neglect or the frustration of justice to the masses of humanity was the clearest of all the signs of the underlying malady of society.

But it is also only truthful to say that considered as a whole Catholic publicity, as a medium for the distribution through journalism of the teaching mission of the Church, has been altogether inadequate. It remains inadequate. Unless or until far greater and more persistent efforts are put forth to create a Catholic press commensurate with the numbers, the importance and the worth of what American Catholics derive from their Church, and should contribute to the upbuilding of their nation, so long, it seems to me, must the Catholic Church in the United States remain as one of the weaker and more negligible forces in American life—except, of course, on the purely supernatural plane (where, humanly speaking, its effects cannot be estimated), and except for the good results produced by its many splendid institutions of education and philanthropy, and also, of course, by the beneficial work for society in general accomplished by that large number of its children whose lives and characters are formed and directed by its spiritual and moral direction. It may well be that the good done for others than Catholics through such means far exceeds all that might also be done through adequate Catholic journalism and literature; but that seems no good reason for our present neglect of the latter instrumentality; we should have a press comparable with our other achievements, and the sad fact is that we do not have such a press. That fact has been stated over and over again in these pages during the past fifteen years. It seems to me that to proclaim that fact and to work for the changing of it into the fact of the development of a really adequate Catholic press in our country should remain as one of the chief tasks of this journal in the years ahead of it.

Toward a more powerful press

That such a movement toward a more powerful press; toward, beyond all other mediums, a powerful daily press, is most likely to develop, should, I think, be considered certain. Several of our more energetic diocesan weekly papers have given signs of moving in that direction. It is in this period of incubation of such an idea that it will be well for our leaders, and the many alert and ambitious younger Catholics, both in the clerical circles and among the educated laity, to exercise both their critical faculties and their best judgment in surveying our journalism as it is, and in determining in advance what *kind* of daily newspaper would be most desirable to establish.

Broadly speaking, I think that we may say that a choice must be made between two kinds of journal—what is called a "popular" journal, primarily appealing to great masses of readers; and a paper of a kind designed to appeal to readers of a much more limited number than the masses attracted by "popular" journalism. It well may be that we should have papers of both types; perhaps some day we shall; but it seems to me that first of all we need and should work for a daily paper appealing to the few rather than the many.

The mere expression of that decision on the part of even a small number of our leaders would enable American Catholics to come to grips with a problem that lies at the very heart of Catholic publicity. For the main tendency of all journalism is contrary to the idea expressed above. More and more it caters to the less literate masses of the population. More and more it becomes shallow, mainly emotional and sensational, stressing the attraction of pictures rather than language. And much of our Catholic journalism follows the example set by secular journalism. And in doing so, in my opinion it follows the wrong road. At least, it follows the less important road.

Quality rather than Quantity

For surely Catholic publicity should seek quality rather than quantity in its readers and the material it presents to its readers and in its thought, and the expression of that thought. That it should likewise furnish reading and pictures to the masses who would not and never will care for the higher levels of journalism and literature, is certainly true. It is a duty to do so. It should be done on even a greater scale than at present. But until or unless American Catholics also produce journals both daily and weekly and monthly which deliberately cultivate the interest and favor and critical attention of the educated minority, they will in my opinion be failing to function on the level of Catholicism's own inherent value to society.

This is not—most emphatically not—to say that the journal I have in mind should appeal to the well-to-do, the minority of rich or financially secure readers within and without the Church, as distinguished from the majority of both American Catholics and Americans in general who do not belong to that minority. For my long experience in journalism has convinced me that the greater number of men and women who care for serious reading seriously presented—I do not

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mean "serious" as synonymous with dull and pedantic or deliberately "high brow" in treatment or material—are apt to be found among families and groups far removed from the higher income levels. In fact, mere wealth, until or unless its possession has become habitual through generations of possession, and of high cultural use as well—which too rarely happens—is apt to be a stumbling block rather than an aid to its holders in the life of the mind, and the life of the soul. Nevertheless, we must use what words we possess, and until better ones develop we must speak of the "upper" and "lower" classes of society, and the "élite" as differentiated from the "masses," for all their tinge of apparent snobbishness. We must insist upon a truth that crude conceptions of what Democracy means obscures from many—namely, the truth that leadership of the masses toward either good conditions or bad ones depends upon the character and energy of their more mentally alert, mentally educated minorities—and that the further development of our own Catholic intellectual élite is a crying need of our age. To aid in that development is the high task of Catholic publicity which is the special function of THE COMMONWEAL.

All Round Religion

Reflections on a comparative study of religions and the conclusions to be drawn from such a study.

By **T. Lawrason Riggs**

FOR PRESENT PURPOSES I shall define religion as any totality of beliefs and practices regarded by man as establishing relationships between himself and a higher power or powers, upon which he believes himself to be dependent. This note of dependence needs to be stressed as essential in order to distinguish religion from magic, which involves an attempt to coerce the higher powers, and may thus be classed as a primitive form of science rather than as religion, though it has of course been very much entangled with religion.

Though the data I am about to present are capable, I believe, of being effectively used for apologetic purposes, I shall not deal, in presenting them, with the objective truth, philosophical or revealed, of religion in general or of any form of religion in particular; nor shall I consider theories of religion's origin and growth. My concern is solely with such great religions as Hinduism, Buddhism, Judaism, Christianity and Mohammedanism, which have evolved in highly developed cultures and proved their powers of survival by influencing vast numbers of men during long periods of time.

Now the most cursory inspection of such religions reveals two essential aspects: the ideological or doctrinal, and the normative or ethical; they give man things to believe and they tell him how to act. They succeed, in short, in satisfying his mind and his will.

It is of course true that these faculties in the concrete individual do not function independently of each other. "Nothing can be willed which is not first known;" that is to say, I cannot deliberately choose, as distinct from spontaneously desiring, to do something of which I am totally ignorant; and on the other hand if I am to know anything thoroughly, I must will to do so with persistence and self-control. Even in the purely rational field of mathematics, I shall not acquire extensive knowledge unless I very stubbornly will to do so. In this sense, my thinking even here must be wishful thinking. In more concrete fields of knowledge it is clear that the will plays an important part in directing attention and in the selection, emphasizing and interpretation of evidence. It is human persons, not disembodied intellects, who know or believe themselves to know, and when the knowledge *matters* enormously, it cannot be dealt with as though it did not. To be specific, the judgment of many supposedly objective critics as to the authenticity of reported sayings of Christ is obviously influenced by what they would like Him to have said, and these likings are in turn influenced by the ethical sympathies of the critics.

Such a religious example leads us to the fact that human minds and wills show, in the long run, an incurable proclivity to relate themselves to religion. Men are normally prone to believe that their mental efforts have brought them to at least some iota of absolute truth; they are equally prone to conclude that the standards by which they try to live bear some relation to eternal values. However difficult it may be to say, in a given case, whether a man is acting according to his beliefs or "rationalizing" congenial ways of acting, history shows that his thirst for the Absolute is insatiable, that he does not rest content

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for long with any form of agnosticism, relativism or pragmatism.

Beliefs and laws

It is not surprising, therefore, to find that the great religions are all characterized by beliefs and laws. Jews, Christians and Mohammedans have as their fundamental religious act the profession of belief in one God, with additions expressive of the specific beliefs of the two younger religions. In Hinduism and Buddhism the situation is considerably different. These religions, at least in theory, are strongly pantheistic; they do not tend to relate intellectual statements to ultimate reality, as the Western mind tends to do. Nevertheless Hinduism assumes the doctrine of transmigration of souls and the existence of a complicated pantheon of gods; and Buddhism, though it began as a philosophic way of life that was professedly agnostic, has also always taught transmigration, and has in its developed forms built up a very elaborate theology. Incidently, the disclaiming of dogmas, in accordance with modern fashions, is no sign that they are not present. They abound, for instance, in Christian Science and Theosophy, not to mention the pseudo-religion of Marxianism. It is in fact, only by postulating them that religion can show any survival value at all.

On the ethical side one need only mention the decalogue adopted by Christianity from Judaism, the Mohammedan laws concerning prayer, fasting, almsgiving and the pilgrimage to Mecca and the Hindu and Buddhist respect for all forms of life. Ethics as well as doctrine have, in all these great religions, played essential rôles in enabling them to survive, to flourish and to win out over their rivals. Thus, when Buddhism came to Japan, the very childish religion of Shinto was in time almost absorbed by the much greater intellectual and moral vitality of the invader; and the same thing happened, in a far more complete way, when Christianity met its various rivals. Critics will continue to pass all sorts of judgments on the doctrines and ethics of the great religions, their coherence, their reasonableness, their relative powers of survival; but no observer of history can deny their importance.

Reckoning with the emotions

The analysis of highly developed religion into doctrine and ethics is, however, a far from complete one. Just as mind and will do not function independently of each other, so they do not function apart from those states we call emotions. Rational animals we doubtless are, but still animals as contrasted with angels, and that of a sufficiently developed sort to have powerful and complex feelings. In proportion to our experience of the troubles of mankind, we cannot but realize that on the management of the emotions depends, to a great extent, the difference between a normal, happy life and an abnormal, miserable one. The emotions are *there* in all of us, and they demand to be reckoned with. A refusal to do so, an attempt to lead a life which ignores them, solves no problems, but merely causes them to assume more complicated and baffling forms. Insistence on this fact by the various schools of modern psychiatry is surely sound, whatever we may think of other aspects of the systems. On the other hand, a life over which the emotions hold unbridled sway is an obviously unbalanced one.

The great religions have, on the whole, recognized these facts, namely, that the emotions have their necessary place, and that this place is a subordinate one. These religions have given outlets to the emotions and have provided emotional comfort, not by any system of deliberate psychological planning, but spontaneously, in the course of their development. No small part of their power of survival has, in fact, been due to this. On the other hand any organization of religious activity which fails to allow for the emotions, or attempts to suppress them rather than direct them, can have only a limited and temporary success.

Art and Ritual

There is, moreover, another aspect of human nature, even more closely related to our material organisms than our feelings, namely, sense experience, without which we can neither feel, nor know, nor will. The great religions have all used this experience, have sought to make it a channel for spiritual values, have estheticized and sacramentalized it. Religious art, including ritual, is the result, sometimes developing along lines contradictory to the theoretical principles of the religion in question. Buddhism, for instance, though denying in theory that matter is ultimately more than an illusion, has produced religious painting and sculpture rivaled in their spiritual sublimity only by those of Christianity. Certain religions or subdivisions of religions have of course deliberately limited their use of plastic art by being *aniconic*, that is to say, opposed, through fear of idolatry, to the representation of sacred beings or objects, or even of any living creature; but this has left free the development of other artistic forms, such as the magnificent religious poetry of Judaism. In the case of Mohammedanism, another aniconic religion, there have been noteworthy developments of plastic art within the imposed limits, in architecture, non-representational ornament and calligraphy. Ritual and ceremonial are forms of religious art which have almost universally played an important part. It is true, of course, that the Protestant Reformation was marked by a violent reaction against the ritual and other esthetic aspects of Catholic Christianity. Christ's statement that God must be worshiped in spirit and

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truth was taken to mean that man must worship *as though he were a spirit,* and the "materialistic" aspect of Catholic religious art, and especially of Catholic ritual was condemned as idolatry, or at least as pernicious formalism. To one raised in this Puritan tradition, even though he may have abandoned its positive beliefs, the complex sensuous appeal of a Catholic solemn Mass is still likely to seem a highly artificial and formalistic way of worshiping God. Yet as a matter of fact it exemplifies, quite apart from its theological significance, a perfectly normal and human phase of religious activity, elaborated on the whole, not by deliberate design, but by an evolutionary process comparable to that which takes place in the history of language. Ritual satisfies an important religious need of mankind, not only by providing immediate esthetic satisfaction, but by producing, through its traditional character, a sense of continuity with the religious experience of the past and of solidarity with the other members of the religious group in the present. It is noteworthy that a reaction towards realizing the spiritual value of ritual and sacrament, together with other forms of religious art, an emphasis on what is sometimes rather forbiddingly described as "the technique of worship," is taking place on a considerable scale in Protestant circles.

Social character of religion

What has been said of ritual as producing a sense of continuity and solidarity might be said also, of course, of the other aspects of religion which have been considered. This brings us to the mention of a final aspect, namely, the social character of religion. Each of the great religions constitutes in some sense a church, its adherents tend to think of their religious lives as related in thought, conduct and worship to those of their fellows. Even though they are leading, for religious purposes, lives of more or less complete isolation, men remain conscious of something like a communion of saints. Indeed, the idea of a purely individualistic religion seems, in the light of human experience, to be almost a contradiction in terms; the bond or "ligation," from which the word "religion" is derived, binds man not only to Divinity, but also to his fellow men.

In the foregoing considerations I have inevitably dealt in a very summary way with a vast and complex subject. Obviously the great religions cannot be neatly analysed into intellectual, ethical, emotional, sensuous and social elements; obviously also, individuals and groups within these religions vary widely as to the relative importance of one or another of these elements in their religious lives. Yet history can show that all these elements have been present in all the great religions, and the inference is that this fact accounts, from one point of view at least, for their survival and development. To satisfy man's individual and social needs, religion, however much it allows for the special tendences of this or that particular temperament, must avoid an attitude of "not-this-but-that," must be, in short, as many-sided as life itself.

Various conclusions

Very different conclusions can of course be drawn from the data. Thus an observer averse to the recognition of any religion's transcendent claims may find in the fact that religion has succeeded by satisfying the manifold needs of human nature proof that religion is of *merely* human origin, nothing more than a creation of man for his own satisfaction.

A Protestant in sympathy with the theology of Luther or Calvin, a sympathy that is extremely marked in the modern "theology of crisis" whose leading exponent is Karl Barth, would doubtless agree that the naturalistic conclusion would be sound if its premises were sound, would even agree that Christianity, in so far as its evolution has expressed man's urge to satisfy his various supermaterial needs, was indeed a merely natural creation. Such a Protestant, however, would proceed to condemn this aspect of historical Christianity as a corruption of the Gospel of Christ, which, according to him, is a revelation from a totally transcendent God, who has sent His Word to redeem man from nature's total corruption. To find, in short, that Christianity, whatever else it does, satisfies human needs in ways at all resembling those of other great religions, means only, according to this type of Protestant, that the finder completely misconceives the true character of Christianity itself.

. . . and the Catholic

The Catholic, on the other hand, need find no difficulty in recognizing that Christianity has shared with other great religions the power to satisfy, in greater or less degree, the varied aspects of human nature, or even in agreeing that, humanly speaking, Christianity has flourished because of this power. The Catholic denies of course, that the survival of Christianity is due *merely* to this. He believes in the supernatural and uniquely true character of his faith; but he believes in this primarily on other grounds, and he believes also that "grace perfects nature." Why should not the only complete revelation that God has made, and the evolving reactions of the historic Church to revealed truth, utilize the needs of human nature and develop in their expression according to these needs? This is, to the Catholic, just what was to be expected. Far from finding in the facts an argument against the claims of Christianity, he may well find in them an important confirmation of the truth of these claims.

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Prelude to World Revolution

An estimate of the Janus-faces of Russian and German Nihilism and two current books by Rauschning and Souvarine.

By George N. Shuster

THE WAR which is now in progress is, of course, an episode in the history of contemporary revolution. What has happened in Austria, Czechoslovakia and Poland is to be accounted for primarily on the basis of unsuccessful, badly inefficient techniques of counter-revolution; and the present policies of Great Britain and France cannot be understood until one sees them as last-minute measures to ward off revolutionary pressure against the West. It may be that "national interest" plays a rôle on the grim stage now set for us all, but it is a slight and insignificant rôle at best. There are no commercial or industrial stakes for which the British could have been induced to play with so appalling an expenditure of money and human lives. There is no territory or advantage for which the French can be said to be fighting at this hour.

I have said "unsuccessful, badly inefficient techniques of counter-revolution." Little Dr. Dollfuss was one of the first statesmen in Europe to understand clearly that Hitler meant not the revision of the Versailles Treaty (as so many trustingly supposed) but a revolt the ultimate meaning of which was the same as the revolt which had changed the face of Russia. He had lived long enough in Germany to be under no illusions. His belief was that his country could become the immune area on which victorious resistance to Hitler inside the German-speaking realm could be organized. Dollfuss had strength and weakness alike. He knew that an attack on poverty was long overdue, and he felt certain that traditional Christianity could wage that attack successfully. But he was misled into thinking that fascism could be a close ally of that Christianity. This mistake was not his alone—it was the blunder into which numerous Christians fell because they read neither the present nor the past aright. I shall emphasize this blunder here once more, though it cannot be my present purpose to explain it.

The mistake was so catastrophic because it veiled in a thick mantle of smoke the whole battlefield on which the struggle against revolution was being fought. It became impossible to distinguish friend from foe. When Hitler gave the Nazi salute and emphasized the virtues of child-bearing, he sounded like a fascist; and when Stalin killed off the "old comrades" who had once been peers of Lenin and Trotsky, he too began to look like a fascist and was, indeed, ultimately described as one in the German press after the signing of the pact which led to the war on Poland. The naïve could always hope that some way of coming to terms with the Fuehrer might be found, after all, to safeguard the rights of religion, Catholic or Protestant, and on a lesser plane, the rights of property and of life. In England conservative men hoped to the very last that National-Socialism meant only a rather erratic process of returning to an aristocratic tradition. In Central Europe these hopes were far more unrestrained and baneful. Poland is the tragedy of a people who thought that no agreement between Hitler and Stalin was conceivable.

To me it still seems incredible that the Nazi war on the Jews should have helped so much to keep the mask on the Fuehrer's face intact instead of tearing it aside so completely that even the children of the time might see the reality. But the fact remains. People ignored the truth that depriving any human being of inalienable rights is next to blasphemy the most basic of crimes. And they said with Hitler that the Jew was the uncanny begetter of revolution—the moral beast who had spawned the Bolshevist monster. In so doing they made Nazism their ally. They did so here, in this country, where it mattered relatively little; but they also did so abroad, where it mattered very much. For this ally was like a cup of poison disguised in a goblet of wine. Even in France and Britain the mystery of anti-Semitism helped to bring about the awful clarity of the present debacle. It will not do now to hide one's face in the sand and declare in a muffled voice that one had always "predicted" that Hitler would some day join Stalin. The fact remains that one was once Hitler's ally, and that by political pressure one helped in this country to prevent what alone might have halted the otherwise irresistible onward sweep of tragedy—a clear and forceful statement by the United States that it wanted world order and world peace.

The riddle of Stalin

On the other side, the answers that were given to the riddle of Stalin were no less vapid and baneful. During the early twenties, Wilhelm Ditt-

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mann (who had some right to consider himself a tried and true Marxist revolutionary) returned from Russia to spurn the "revolution" in progress there as a denial of the freedom to which labor had aspired in behalf of mankind. There was in Dittmann's reasoned statement no phrase which might not have been applied with accuracy to the Nazi "revolution" after 1934. But the international moths swarmed none the less around the lantern of the Kremlin. To them Lenin, and afterward Stalin, became dictators whose every breath was a sigh for the well-being of the common man, whereas Hitler's pulse beat incessantly for the capitalist and the militarist. Stalin was the great anti-imperialist, we were told, the incorruptible anti-anti-Semite, the ardent protagonist of Spanish democracy, the Eastern archangel who would some time open wide the gates of grewsome Nazi concentration camps. Those who thus made the Soviet dictator their ally were also frequently very good people, distressed by poverty and injustice, serfdom and ignominy, who believed that the little Georgian with the crafty eyes guarded a vial in which the remedy for these ills was housed.

Like the myth of Hitler, the legend of Stalin is responsible for the inner corrosion of Europe and its inability to ward off "revolution." How very much of the best blood of labor and the intellectuals has been spilled in the belief that Moscow would soon send legions to the rescue! From 1934 to 1939 fine young men were sent to their death in droves thinking that their sacrifice would pave the way for the *coup de grace* which Stalin would administer to the Nazi system. Theirs was really a sublimely heroic immolation. How can one cease to wonder what might have happened had we of the West had the allegiance of those men—and why it was that we did not?

The revolution is here

Who can answer either question? The "revolution" is here, menacing as never before. It is interpreted from two contrasted standpoints in recent books which carry the difficult task of analysis a good step farther than it has been carried before. The authors are converts, and I have heard some say that for this reason their books are not entirely credible. Why this should be so remains nebulous. Paul was a convert from Judaism; Augustine from the doctrines of the Manicheans; Loyola from the romances of chivalry. It so happens that Wordsworth turned from Pantisocracy and Chesterton from the 1890's. At any rate, Hermann Rauschning's *The Revolution of Nihilism,* of which a good version has appeared in English since I wrote a notice of the German original for THE COMMONWEAL, is the best and most helpful commentary on the forces which have made the Nazi upheaval what it is. Like all other books, it presents views which are the author's own and for which no claim can be made save that they are the opinions of an intelligent and unusually well-informed man. But the major thesis of the book—that Nazism is dynamized tyranny in action for the sake of a momentum which must keep on going if the nihilism which is the true meaning of that tyranny is not to be revealed—is supported by every shred of evidence accumulated during six long years, bloodier and more brutal than the sheltered American can imagine. I have said that it should be read by everyone interested in the Nazi problem. Let me add that it should be read now by all who are concerned with the stand which they themselves shall take.

The other book is Boris Souvarine's *Stalin.** I write of this book under the dual disadvantage of not having either any first hand knowledge of Russia or any acquaintanceship with the author. But it confirms so well accounts recently supplied by men who, like Willi Muenzenberg, were once German Communist co-workers of the Third Internationale, that it seems to me to possess a reliability far greater than its somewhat slovenly literary technique might argue for. Souvarine suggests that the Bolshevist revolution was from the beginning in mortal danger of being swept from the moorings of social reconstruction by the imperious desire of those whose wills determined the drift and tempo of its development. But he is wholly certain that with Stalin this danger has been transformed into historic fact. The dictator of Russia, too, is a man without a solid philosophy of human conduct and of human welfare; without a concept to which the energies of his people can be democratically harnessed; and without a desire to subordinate the nature of human existence to the powers and limitations of the intelligence. Souvarine speaks of the "miscarriage of Bolshevism." In view of the facts he amasses, and of others one learns of, it might, perhaps, be preferable to speak of the meaningless perpetual motionism of the Bolshevist system. This life of Stalin is a highly important, heart-searing, instructive volume. It comes within earshot of being a truly great book.

No one must look for the similarity between Russia and Germany on the superficies. The likeness is not one of ideas or even personalities. Other similarities are more beguiling without being of more elemental significance. Stalin is, true enough, the paradox of Marxism turned imperialist, while Hitler is the paradox of German imperialism turned "socialist." Both pose as inspirers of a new art and culture; both are grandiose builders; both are surrounded day and night with guards who slay not merely the lurking enemy but the possibly disillusioned friend. All these things are not the central, towering thing—the fact that Nazism and Bolshevism alike are today ideologies whirling along without any connection with the

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causes whence they sprang or the goals to which they might lead. The faith which once informed the followers of each is gone. There remains a horrible, almost demoniacal drift towards historical revivals which today possess no meaning. Souvarine believes that Ivan the Terrible has been reincarnated in Stalin; some of us have thought that Hitler is a new Mahomet. But larger visions suggest themselves. The World War of 1914 may have been started primarily because the German world was fearful of a Russian advance to the Dardanelles, which would have blocked the route Eastward; and yet today Germany is making Russian advance to those Straits conceivable. Stalin is pushing Russia along the Baltic and towards the Adriatic; and yet these advances have in the past always ended in Russian defeat and catastrophe. How shall a Russia weaker than it ever was before make successful war? And how can Germany avoid war against Russia? The panorama afforded by the year 1939 is therefore a grotesquely farcical spectacle in which the Communism from which Stalin came and the Pan-Germanism whence Hitler derived are alike made ridiculous by themselves.

I conclude. It is high time we should realize what is at stake and who the protagonists are. What Western Europe is attempting to ward off is no charge on the City of London or the Paris Bourse. Nor is it the revolutionary organization of workingmen, or the idea of military dictatorship. The specter to be banned is the tyranny of meaninglessness. The citizen to whom life has meant a certain limited opportunity to adjust his existence to a hierarchy of values is left to face the onward march of a system in which there are no values. It might be difficult to obey unquestioningly, but it would still not be impossible if one had a feeling that the act of subservience served some useful purpose. But to obey for obedience's sake—to obey in a world where institutions are sentenced to death and the norms of existence overturned for no reason either overt or hidden—is a form of slavery against which the normal man rebels. For my part, I can only repeat what I have said before. I believe that God meant man to stand erect. And if the new "revolution" leaves him no choice save that between the concentration camp and the battlefield, European man as I conceive of him can only choose the battlefield. It is idle to think of evading the choice. There is no evasion. There is no evasion because life as the "revolution" visualizes it has no other function than this choice.

Only an Incident

Some striking reflections in reminiscent vein on street preaching, teaching, learning—the laity, the clergy.

By **the Most Reverend Francis C. Kelley**

FIFTEEN YEARS ago I fled to Europe on the excuse of attending a Eucharistic Congress in Amsterdam and a meeting of the International Committee. I had another excuse too, for I had been appointed Bishop and I wanted to get as far from Oklahoma as I could until after my consecration. A bishop-elect is not permitted to do anything in the way of governing his diocese till he is officially in charge—Rome's clear wisdom. Visitors from Oklahoma had begun to drift in on me. I wanted to avoid the perils of intimate conversations.

From Amsterdam to Louvain was not far and there was the old university town to see. Arriving there, I called at the American College, and lo! Oklahoma students were awaiting me. I gave a conference, an easy conference, just a chat about the things, like home missions, that interested me. In the course of it I spoke of the Catholic Evidence work in London and expressed the hope that the Oklahomans at least would take advantage of their nearness to England to go over during vacation and see what actually was being done. Three of them took the hint, enlisted for a time in the Evidence Guild, lectured on the streets and in Hyde Park, caught the spirit and brought it back home with them when ordained.

That was fifteen years ago. Today I have before me a remarkable report. It is from one of these students. He wants me to come to his parish to dedicate a church, confirm thirty converts and incidentally "meet the population." He has been working on the streets and at the cross-roads. His largest congregations are always those he drums up for sermons and instructions in the open air. He holds that it is his job to make the county Catholic. He is trying to do it.

Last summer he had a school for street preachers and, though the announcement came late, there were twelve young priests in attendance. The pastor was quite nice to me for he put me on the faculty. The students too were quite nice, for

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they came a hundred miles to hear my two lectures; though lunch at the Bishop's house may, I suspect, have had something to do with the trip. The young priests listened and conferred during the three weeks of school, that is in day-time. When evening came, they departed for the small towns plentifully scattered over the county: towns as bare of Catholics as the desert is of water-cress. They went out in groups of four. The congregations were ready. Announcements had prepared the people for a "look-see!" Few had ever had one at a Catholic priest before. They came from all over the countryside and not entirely out of curiosity. There was hunger for the spiritual in them. Only one of the young priests assembled for the school had ever done such a bold thing as they were doing out there on the Oklahoma prairie where, in summer, all clothes are penitential.

The young priests learned all about dust and discomfort as well as the joyful fact that they could rise to the occasion and, under unaccustomed conditions, acquit themselves with distinction. Few of them had ever thought of preaching under the little canopy of a gas station. Of course they started with timidity but they ended by adding a glow of satisfaction to the hundred-and-some degrees of prairie temperature. There was a reason: they had learned that the crowds would come, would listen, would learn and not only be kind about it but grateful. In the seminary they had learned a lot about Saint Paul, but out there in the little Oklahoma towns they learned more, for they felt him. It's a thrilling thing to feel the spirit of Saint Paul—if you see what I mean, and I think you do.

What they talked about

What did these young priests talk about? Christ. The rest took care of itself. The usual apologetic came out of the main subject. That was as it should be: Christ the Light of the World, Christ the Teacher, Christ the Saviour, Christ the Inexhaustible Spring of Living Water. Why shoot alone right into the rapids of controversy when the Divine Guide knew so well how to find the smooth passage for us?

It's all very well for me to be sitting down at a desk in a fairly cool library (it's only ninety-six degrees indoors today) and write enthusiastically about what others did. I wasn't out there on the prairie. I visited the "school" only to meet the "students" and take a meal with them. But I am not taking any credit. In fact I can't see where I can "horn in" on the glory at all, except for that one little speech at the American College in Louvain when I was only a bishop-to-be. Perhaps I will get a crumb of glory at judgment for it, but certainly not a loaf. All I really did for the street preaching school was to say: "Sure, go ahead," and feed the students once at the episcopal table. It will be easy enough to confirm thirty converts—but I didn't make them.

Being a bishop has its handicaps, especially when one has to keep an eye on what someone called "the business side of religion." There wasn't much of a business side to the school. The students came in their own cars as they were asked to do because the cars would be needed to reach the "pitches." They paid board at country-town rates. There were no school fees. Not that money would not have helped, but since there was none the school had to get along without it. I didn't have any and the director had less. Besides, he was building a church; and you know what that means. It may happen that next year there will be a little money, but I am not banking on it. Where could it come from? Such work lacks the magnetic drawing power because so few see it. But who knows what will happen when it shows results, as it certainly did in Oklahoma?

Twelve young priests left the improvised school to go back home and report to their bishops, fatigued but happy. They had had a new experience and felt, I hope, that the knowledge acquired by it was worth putting to work elsewhere. They were a fine lot of young priests when they came and I think a finer lot when they left. Who were they? I won't tell you. I won't even tell you who ran the school. Why should I? It's the thing itself that counts, not the persons. And I am hoping that the day will come when you'll see the nameless ones in action while driving along the roads of America. Maybe they will tell you their names then. Anyhow this is just a "mustard seed." Let's wait and see how high and wide the tree will grow.

If the idea of street preaching grows, will Catholic laymen here, as in England, lead it? There certainly is a place for them, but the layman does not draw like the priest. The reason is that people are curious to see and hear a priest. But if the mustard tree grows wide, there will be much room in its shade and the layman will come in and help. In the meantime, there is room for the work of his pen. We need him in Catholic journalism. We need more books. We need the touch of the layman who walks and talks with his fellow laymen. Yes, if the little seed becomes a great tree, there will be many calls for the laity. After all, it's everybody's job in some way, or it wouldn't be a job after the heart of Christ.

Stepchildish

A politician's fortunate,
When all is said and done.
He has a hundred thousand friends,
Besides a barrel of fun.
While a statesman has but few of the first
And of the latter—none!

W. E. FARBSTEIN.

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The Change Beyond

One of the founders signalizes the momentous social displacements that have characterized the last quarter century.

By Ralph Adams Cram

TWENTY-SEVEN years ago, Michael Williams and I conceived the idea of a weekly magazine under exclusive lay control and representing the best Catholic opinion in the widest possible field of current thought and action. This came about through a correspondence prompted by a reading of Mr. Williams' admirable volume, "Priest of the Ideal." The year 1912 was one of prosperity, confidence and optimism; the world seemed advancing normally along the generally accepted lines of "progressive evolution" towards a high destiny; all seemed serene, and the moment auspicious.

Without warning, the first World War came upon us, and in the great debâcle our plans were put in escrow to await the issue of a doubtful situation. The war passed and was succeeded by a peace, the disastrous consequences of which were mercifully hid from us as well as from the greater part of the rest of the world. Some ten years after the inception of the project we went forward with high hearts towards the realization of a dream. In due time came the Calvert Associates, the conferences of Catholics, Protestants and Jews, and finally THE COMMONWEAL, whose fifteenth anniversary is now signalized. Under Mr. Williams' editorship and that of his successors, THE COMMONWEAL has, I maintain, nobly realized its original idea.

Looking back to the years of conception, slow gestation and auspicious birth, I am deeply impressed by the sea-change that has overtaken the world in this space of but little more than a quarter-century. In general devolution has taken the place of evolution, and in many important respects man, and the society he determines for himself, have alarmingly slipped backward; and in general there seems no obvious reason to suppose that the process is not continuing with increasing momentum. By the grace of God, however, and as history clearly indicates, as an epoch courses to its term after its ascent and culmination, signs increasingly show themselves of the reaction and recovery that lead to regeneration; a new period of culture and civilization slowly takes form and shape.

Such, it seems to me, is the case today. For twenty years, amongst some of real value, the bad elements in our modern era (implicit in its origins about the year 1500 with the renaissance, Protestant revolution and, a little later, the political and social revolution) have become more gross and disastrous, and today, in moral, intellectual, political and social anarchy and chaos, reveal the evidences of their own self-destruction. Were we to regard the world as it reveals itself today, without looking deeper than the rather horrible surface it is making so conspicuous and unavoidable, we might be justified in abandoning ourselves to despair. In his "Dream of John Ball" William Morris makes his prophet of social redemption say, "Ill would it be, at whiles, were it not for the change beyond the change." The change is certainly here, but beneath the lamentable show of things, is "the change beyond."

It is this that I think of now in the midst of "wars and rumors of wars"; materialism that has voided life of its spiritual values; the breaking of pledges and the violation of treaties; the folly of politicians and the ineptitude of statesmen; industrial, commercial and financial monopoly; technocracy, mechanized warfare, and megalopolis; the prostituting of almost every scientific invention, devised for the good of man, into bloody instruments for his destruction; futile philosophies, a lunatic art, silly superstitions, and the persecution of religion in those countries where it is not regarded with large indifference. Verily, Mr. Hooton's "Twilight of Man" does not seem to be overdrawn.

The last days

Here are the words of the Apostle Paul to Timothy: "This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boastful, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy. Without natural affection, truce breakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good. Traitors, heady, high-minded, lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God. Having a form of godliness but denying the power thereof."

"The last days." Yes, but not now of this world, only of one epoch, as always when such is coming to an end. Meanwhile the new hope arises, and this hope is of many kinds. This is no place and there is no space to list them all, but I single out one for its rise and progress which just about

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covers the time between the conception of the idea of THE COMMONWEAL and its anniversary. I mean that great and redemptive movement in which are merged many factors which pass under the names of agrarianism, distributism, cooperatives, rural reconstruction, decentralization, the guild system and, rightly understood, the corporative state.

In 1912, there was little of this to be seen. The process of general agglomeration was in full swing. In industry, finance, trade, manufacture, agriculture, the single big unit was the ideal. Youth was leaving the country for the cities, ever growing larger, more congested and more compelling. Scientific discovery and mechanical invention, exclusively consecrated to material ends, were either progressively eliminating handicraft and manual labor, or transforming them into purely automatic operations from which all mentality was eliminated. The first World War intensified this process to an amazing degree. The personal farmer and individual farm worker by hand and horsepower gave place to enormous units organized on a capitalistic basis, worked by "labor-saving" machinery and a comparatively small number of men employed on a wage basis. Home crafts had long since disappeared; now the self-reliant, self-sufficient farmer was superseded by the day laborer, the peon and the share cropper.

The inevitable result we have seen now for upwards of ten years. Ten or fifteen millions of unemployed, maintained on the dole or by ingenious occupations invented out of thin air, many of them useless or superfluous, and financed by increased taxes on the employed; a disastrous decline in the sense of personal initiative and responsibility and deterioration in character of the individual and the community. The fact does not need to be labored or even declared. It is sufficiently obvious. Already men like Stuart Chase, Herbert Agar, Ralph Borsodi, Father Rawe, Father Coady, David Cushman Coyle, Ernest Hooton, that most admirable publication, *Free America,* and many others have discovered the trend and the danger and have analyzed and described it with devastating logic and statistics. In this they have gone on from where Chesterton, Belloc and Penty (those hardly regarded seers and prophets of a generation ago) left off, and with redoubled force and effectiveness. Writing is good, indeed a prime necessity, but it is not enough. Thought must be actuated, and now this is coming to pass.

Agrarian, distributist, cooperative . . .

I repeat, the agrarian, distributist, cooperative movement of the present day seems to me the most significant and promising activity now in progress. It may prove so if the dominant and opposed tendencies now in control do not work out first to their destined conclusion. The egregious mess into which modern civilization has fallen and where it is now helplessly floundering must be resolved in some way under peril of destruction. It ought to be evident that little can be expected in the line of aid and direction from professional sociologists, economists and educators, and even less from politicians. There are plenty of clear-sighted, ardent and eloquent individuals, but the only organic power I can see at present to coordinate individual effort and enforce it is the Catholic Church.

What is being done by the National Catholic Rural Life Conference, the St. Francis Xavier University and by individual members of the Catholic hierarchy and local priests in many parts of America is, as practical and important as it is, for the moment, comparatively little known and less regarded by a secular society wedded to its materialistic, technocratic and clay-footed idols. It puts to shame other religious and secular bodies and a "pump priming" government. Palliatives and panaceas scratch only the surface and like such activities are mostly irritants. The Church, basing its action on the strong foundations of the great encyclicals. "Rerum Novarum" and "Quadrigesimo Anno," has gone below the surface and has found its old philosophy, supremely evident during the Middle Ages and forgotten only for a time, that not only makes clear the fatal weakness of modern civilization, but incites to, and starts the beginnings of, its correction and regeneration.

This movement has many aspects. In the first place, if fully carried out, it would do away with the greater part of unemployment through making men (or the able, intelligent and worth-while moiety) self-supporting and no longer insecure hirelings. Man, pursued for a century by the mechanical Frankenstein's monster he light-heartedly had made, has now been overtaken and left behind. The labor-saving—or rather labor eliminating—machine has superseded him as the automobile has the horse. Unless the millions, dispossessed of their natural right to work, can be made self-supporting, they must subsist on charity, or die. The well-meant and efficient activities of the physician, the surgeon and the humanitarian reduced the latter alternative to a minimum, while the reproductive potentiality of the human species seems to increase as the field of other activities is diminished.

It is the object of the agrarian-cooperative movement, now so strongly supported by the Catholic Church, to solve as far as possible the problem of the unemployed by making unit families, gathered in social groups of human scale, self-supporting on the land, plus home crafts and communally owned and administered mechanical production. Sweden and the Scandinavian peoples in general have shown the way; therefore they are the most happy, orderly and civilized societies to be found anywhere on this planet today. We can better

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learn from them than from the technocracies, industrial democracies and the power-dictatorships of contemporary Europe and the Americas.

While the most obvious benefit to be derived from the agrarian-cooperative movement is the solving in large measure of the problem of unemployment, it has a sociological function the value of which is not merely temporary: the meeting of a need that is characteristic of a particular moment in time, and is a constant. All the most profound students of man and society during the last twenty-five years—Ortega y Gasset, Berdyaev, de Madariaga and latest of all, Professor Hooton—have agreed that human evolution (if it ever existed) is now going backward, and that the general mass of human beings is now declining towards the grade of the moron. I do not propose to argue this point, only to suggest that the present condition of the world, the democracies quite as much as the dictatorships, is conclusive. Now if this ominous declension were due to some cosmic law, the case would indeed be hopeless. Fortunately it is not. The far-off beginnings may be traced back to certain happenings of some four or five hundred years ago, but the effective cause of the great acceleration of the process is to be found in the mechanization of work and industry during the last half-century. In a word, the "machine age" has done it. By making the greater part of human labor a purely mechanical process requiring no cerebral process whatever, the "hands" (apt phrase!) so employed tend to become robots. Whatever mind they were endowed with at birth ceases to function through inactivity. Any human faculty not called into operation for a considerable time tends to atrophy, becoming only a vestigial remnant. The "assembly line" has become the sufficient symbol of mechanical labors, and under its operation mind decays.

If we are to see a recovery of human intelligence, individual character and sense of responsibility, it will be not through the public school system, legislative action, or, I fear for the moment, the influence of corporate religion, but through some form of life where personal ownership, initiative and responsibility take the place of what is, in effect, slave labor. Not "one man, one vote" but one man, one farm, one craft, one freedom.

I have used the phrase "slave labor." In a sense this is no exaggeration when applied to the present estate of a large section of the working class here in America, and in all other countries where finance capitalism (not to be confused with property capitalism) is inseparably linked with a mechanical order of industry. In a paper I read two years ago before the Richmond meeting of the Catholic Rural Life Conference, I maintained that no man was a free man who was on wage, under a capitalistic organization, and who had not, at need, the power to support himself and his family from individually owned land or other *real* property. If this statement is true, its implications are important and various. The agrarian-cooperative movement is, I think, the answer.

Medical Advance

What medicine has been up to in the last decade and a half.

***By* James J. Walsh**

THE EDITOR of THE COMMONWEAL has asked me to tell the story of medical advance during the life of the magazine. It is surprising how different the practice of medicine has become during the brief interval from the end of the Great War. I doubt whether any corresponding series of years has worked a parallel revolution in the whole history of medicine.

Perhaps nothing illustrates this better than the change that has come over the practice of physicians as to the taking and giving of blood to sufferers from exhausting diseases or serious injuries involving considerable loss of blood. During most of the nineteenth century, and for many hundreds of years before, doctors bled their patients mercilessly as a routine practice for nearly all ordinary diseases. Disease was supposed to be due to toxic materials circulating in the human system and thus causing the symptoms of the affection. Bleeding the patient freely was thought to decrease the total blood in the body, and to lessen the amount of infectious material that was disturbing the patient. Venesection, it was taught, would decrease the amount of toxic substance present and thus help the patient to overcome the disease.

Physicians now follow exactly the opposite practice, especially in severe diseases. They give, and not take, blood. An ingenious apparatus for transfusion of blood has taken the place of venesection. Blood donors, that is, men and women who are ready to sell their blood in limited quantities for the benefit particularly of well-to-do

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patients, are kept constantly in touch with hospitals and private practitioners who want to administer this new blood treatment, so different from the blood-letting of the olden time.

The change that has come over the treatment of patients so far as venesection and transfusion is concerned is very like that which has come over the prescription of medicines of various kinds. It is amusing to get a look at the prescription books of druggists a score of years ago and less. The physician's prescriptions of a decade and a half ago were mainly of pharmaceuticals, that is, of plant and mineral substances which were considered to be healing for patients suffering from various diseases. Now to a very great extent doctors are prescribing the endocrines, that is, glandular substances that are calculated to replace defective amounts of glandular and vitamin materials, which now preempt the place of drugs.

Vitalizers vs. drugs

Among old-time physicians there was a very general persuasion that nature had provided in the animal and mineral kingdoms remedies for all manner of diseases, provided only that the medical scientists could find them. Now physicians are intent on prescribing for the needs of the body by administering substances that for some reason are lacking in individuals. Deficiency diseases have come to occupy an extremely important place in pathology, human and animal, and a great deal of attention is being paid to the treatment of them. Needless to say the prescribing of substances to remedy body deficiencies makes for a very different kind of compounding from the type of prescription in vogue before THE COMMONWEAL was born. Vitamins and endocrines are now the order of the day. Some of them are very valuable, others very dubious; some represent definite advances in the treatment of disease, others do not.

Disease carriers

An observation that has been reported at this year's meetings of medical societies is that a species of rat has been found that seems to be the carrier of the germ of infantile paralysis. We have been searching for many years for some clue to the spread of this disease. Dr. John K. Mitchell of Philadelphia says that in the Egyptological collection of the University of Pennsylvania there is the skeleton of a little prince of some six thousand years ago which reveals that he had suffered from infantile paralysis, very much as our President did in our time. In this generation we learned that the plague, that is, the "black death," which caused such havoc during the Middle Ages in many parts of Europe, carrying off in some epidemics fifty percent of the population, is due to the rat flea. That knowledge has enabled us to prevent the spread of plague in modern times.

The existence of rats in the numbers there are in this country is a disgrace to civilization, because it is probable that it and other rodents act as carriers of diseases as yet unrecognized. It is said that there are about as many rats in the United States as there are human inhabitants. They constitute an enormous economic problem, for they consume an immense amount of food, and spoil a lot more in their contact with food materials. They are useful as laboratory experiment animals, but they are very dangerous additions to our already complex problems of food and disease.

Fever

The attitude of the medical profession toward fever is very different now from what it was even two decades ago. A rise in temperature was then considered to represent nature's reaction to infectious diseases, and a special effort was made to bring the fever down. When I was making my medical studies at the turn of the century, typhoid fever was very common in Philadelphia, and people who did not boil their drinking water were very likely to catch it. There were many hundreds of cases of the disease each year, and several hundred deaths. Hospitals would be crowded to capacity with typhoid cases at certain seasons of the year. The favorite mode of treatment was the Brand method, of plunging the patient into a bath of cold water, with ice being used also, if necessary, to bring down the fever.

Now physicians are about agreed in thinking that fever is a favorable natural reaction, helpful rather than harmful to the patient. It has even been found that some serious diseases can be most successfully treated by a period of rise of temperature artificially produced in the patient's body.

The common cold

Physicians have been tackling seriously the problem of the common cold. This is the most frequent infection from which mankind suffers. Probably several million men and women who are in employment lose some days from their occupation every year because of it. It is not infrequently followed by complications of one kind or another that may even lead to a fatal affection. It has been until recent years supposed to be due to exposure to low temperatures, especially when we are overheated. The conviction of physicians in recent decades is that temperature has little or almost nothing to do with the catching of colds. Draughts were also supposed to be a prominent factor in their causation.

Just after the Great War, when the Russian military forces were being disbanded, a group of Russian army surgeons made a series of interesting observations on the subject of taking cold. A number of young soldiers not yet demobilized were quite willing to volunteer for a part in these experi-

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ments, provided only that they received extra rations for their participation. In the wintertime at Moscow, with the temperature some ten degrees below zero, the young subjects of the experiment were stripped to the buff and set to running around the barrack-yard. They continued their running until a rather free sweating occurred. To cool off they were directed to plunge into a snowbank, and then were transferred to the army hospital to await developments. If popular medical traditions were to be believed, this should be the ideal way to catch cold. Contrary to all expectations, not one of the soldiers caught the expected cold. It reminded the medical world of the experience of Nansen, the Arctic explorer, and his dozen men, who spent two years in the Arctic regions, in temperatures mainly below zero, without ever suffering from colds. They had been back to civilization only some ten days before all of them came down with grippy colds.

It is not through the air, or but to a very slight degree, that colds are caught. It is by personal touch, that is by direct or indirect contact, with others who are suffering from the affection at the time. If we have, or have recently had, a grippy cold, and if we shake hands with friends and neighbors we are quite likely to transmit the germs of the disease to them. People suffering from colds unconsciously deposit germs on a thousand points of common contact with other people: doorknobs, change counters, turnstiles, money and so forth. People who rub their hands on a stair balustrade may thus gather in a luxuriant group of cold and various other germs. One member of a family brings home a case of cold, and it rapidly spreads through the whole family.

However, now that investigations have been made into the probable methods whereby colds are spread, scientists are in a better position not only to make further research into the causes of colds, but also to lessen the spread of cold through education of the public in the avoidance of the common contacts that aid the carrying of cold germs.

Other hopeful aspects of recent medicine might be mentioned as proof of the rapid advance in clinical and preventive medicine that has taken place during the life of THE COMMONWEAL. For intance, there has been distinct advance in the treatment of pneumonia, and the mortality rate from this disease is not nearly so high now as it used to be even a generation ago. Then the discovery of some very valuable chemical remedies, such as sulfanilamide, has restored to drugs some of their quondam prestige. There is the promise of a favorable future in this medical department once more. These items are only a few striking exemplifications of the ups and downs of medical practice, which compels the physician to keep an open mind, so as not to allow prejudice to make him an impediment to medical progress.

The Two Years Before

By R. DANA SKINNER

THERE IS a big difference between the fifteenth anniversary of the first publication of THE COMMONWEAL and the seventeenth anniversary of THE COMMONWEAL's organization—a two years' difference in time, but a much wider difference in the inner spirit of adventure.

THE COMMONWEAL always has been, and will always be, an adventure. But when Michael Williams first charged into New York in 1922, his venturesome spirit had a peculiarly electrical quality. He knew exactly the kind of magazine he wanted, or, even better, exactly the kind needed. (His humility was overpowering. What he wanted mattered not at all. What American journalism needed from the Catholic layman meant everything!) He knew who could write for such a paper, or else where writers could and must be found. He went at once to key people. He found them ready for just such an adventure. Many had already made starts in the same direction. All were anxious to see these efforts converge at last into one splendid reality.

A cynic has said that "romance consists of other peoples' troubles, or of your own troubles in a comfortably distant past." But Michael Williams would never be one to accept that view. He found high romance even in his troubles of the moment—and troubles came thick and fast after the first few weeks of bursting enthusiasm. I know, because I was privileged to be at Michael Williams's side during a part of nearly every day while the painful work of "organizing resources" went on. As a true mystic, he expected hard days, dry days, days of darkened hopes and towering fears. He had them, with a vengeance, not once, only, but again and again. He saw them as parts of the whole romantic pattern, saw them sanely and courageously. But they took their toll of his splendid vitality. That is why the spirit of things changed insensibly when, after two long years, the first issue of THE COMMONWEAL was ready for the press. The spirit was no less powerful. It had even gained in force and tenacity. It merely sparkled less, and gave forth, instead, a stronger light.

The troubles took many forms. Some of them held a personal sting. For instance, Michael Williams heard indirectly from one "patron" that he should not be the editor of the new paper because—try to believe it!—he lacked a college degree! His reaction to this was typical. Very well—he would continue to bring the paper to life and then, if needs be, disappear as he had come.

Other troubles were more sordid—money troubles. A "preliminary fund" had been raised to pay for an office and to keep a skeleton staff to-

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gether until there were enough pledges of support to start publication. The pledges came slowly. Weeks ran into months and preliminary funds ran out. Should the idea be abandoned? Some thought so. Those were days of pleading, almost of entreaty. Out of the gloom rose the tall figure of Thomas F. Woodlock. "Gentlemen—I have always said this was an adventure—not a business enterprise. We must go on—as we began!" Mr. Woodlock's words saved THE COMMONWEAL, and more emergency funds were forthcoming.

Other troubles were less serious. The name for the new paper was one of them. Michael Williams had his heart set on "The Criterion." We needed standards in a muddled world, criteria for sane judgments in art, in literature and drama, in economics, in sociology, in our whole way of life. But that name was already pre-empted. At least fifty other names were proposed. "The Commonweal," as Michael Williams' second choice, at last won out.

Then there was the supreme question of editorial freedom and policy. How hospitable would the new paper be to Catholic opinion of all shades, from ultra conservatism to the radicalism of Pope Leo XIII? There was never any real doubt about this. No pledge of financial support was ever accepted save on the clear understanding that both the conservative and the liberal or radical Catholic viewpoints would find a real forum in THE COMMONWEAL. But that point delayed many potential pledges. The truly great surprise was to find the final number of large pledges from men of highly conservative background. They were glad to support freedom of opinion, even though it might, at times, be against their interests.

The good things of those days far outweighed the troubles. Finally three-year pledges aggregating more than $250,000 came to the rescue of a "mere idea." The stature of Michael Williams, as the only possible and appropriate editor, grew with every speech he gave and with every new friend he made. What his native talent had won in the university of journalism and experience was so obvious that by 1924 the worst skeptic was convinced. And what a brood of potential associate editors he gathered about him! Henry Stuart, the apostle of liberty, sensitive, witty, gracious; Thomas Walsh, who always looked ready to pontificate, but never did because he had too much humor; Helen Walker, snatched from the jaws of the *New Republic,* who wrote deliciously and kept everyone in order without looking efficient; these were three, at least, of the literary companions whose comradeship made two years of waiting not only tolerable but exciting.

As the goal of publication came in sight, the activity of the inner circle became feverish. Manuscripts to be read, paper and type to choose, bishops, priests and laymen to be seen and consulted, long evening sessions of editors with and without contributors and friends but always with ideas; so it went, as that group discovered that they had not been dreaming, that in a fortnight, next week, this week, THE COMMONWEAL would be a fact — something wholly new in American Catholic life.

Behind the editors stood that financial stalwart, John McCormick. No one ever covered secret enthusiasms more successfully, nor to better purpose—for he was designed by nature as a publisher's balance wheel, that rare man who understands both literary folk and business. Surrounding John McCormick was the office staff, headed, as now, by Estelle Brady and Mary Frisby. They knew how to laugh, too, which was a good thing when editors started to go haywire and sizzle with adjectives.

Of the entire original group, only Harry Stuart and Tom Walsh are dead. But that word "only" seems misplaced. They were intimates of the spirit Michael Williams had brought to being out of a dream. They were sharers of his high romantic quest. They knew what was happening—a resurgence of Catholic action in literature and the arts. They felt something not unlike glory in it—and they gave it their finest moments and their lives.

Inside Story

By HELEN WALKER HOMAN

THEY CALLED it "The Quiet Corner"—but it wasn't. At least, not if you understand the weekly column so entitled (which in those days occupied a small space toward the rear of the magazine) to have been a picture of the first COMMONWEAL office in its lighter moments. It wasn't quiet, for it seems to me now that we laughed all the time—laughed in the midst of work and a sometimes deafening din.

In that era which began with the birth of the magazine, we occupied two rooms in the Grand Central Terminal Building. ("How grand and central," as somebody put it.) We were a large family for two rooms. First, there was the editor and founder, Michael Williams, but for whose vision in dreaming of such a weekly and fine courage in making that dream a reality there would have been no offices at all. And then there was the business manager, John McCormick, but for whose careful vigilance we might not have been permitted to occupy those offices. And after that came the assistant editor, Thomas Walsh; the business secretary and office-manager, Estelle Brady; Mollie Frisby, the literary secretary; and myself, the other assistant editor.

In all, six in the family—living in two small rooms. It sounded like a welfare case; except

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that we laughed all the time. Even so, sometimes the business manager viewed it as such. From the start, in and out of the office came Dana Skinner, our dramatic critic and member of the Editorial Council, bringing his brilliant "copy" on the theatre.

Not long after that first office was set up in 1924, Henry Longan Stuart came to us as another assistant editor. Some months later, George Shuster arrived in a similar capacity. And now we were eight. The two rooms grew to five; other members were gradually added to the family. One would like to name them all, if only there were space; for their memories, like those of the nucleus of the family, evoke only affection and admiration for the unwavering loyalty which they devoted to "the cause." And it was, most definitely with all of us, a "cause." Michael Williams had seen to that. All of our endeavor was colored by his own enthusiasm—his inspiration reached out and touched the lowliest of us.

In those very first days, each of the editors took a hand at writing "The Quiet Corner" that wasn't. Mr. Williams would dictate it to the clang of a constantly ringing telephone, the jangle of typewriters, and interrupted by a stream of loquacious visitors. Dr. Walsh would write it in his own unforgettable long-hand, with voices and footfalls resounding all about him. When it came my turn, I'd fly to the stores-closet, shut the door, and perch on the rung of a step-ladder, where if I moved, back issues of the magazine, ink-pots and pads would descend upon my head.

Throughout the "Corner" moved, in thin disguise, the personalities who peopled the office: Mr. Williams as "the Editor"; Dr. Walsh as "Dr. Angelicus"; Mr. Stuart as "Britannicus"; Mr. Skinner as "Primus Criticus"; Dr. Shuster as "the Professor"; and Miss Brady as "Miss Boadicea." I doubled for the rôle of "Miss Anonymoncule" and "Euphemia." I can't remember that we cast our business manager, Mr. McCormick, for any rôle. After all, he signed the salary-checks. Nor can I recall that we gave a part to Mollie Frisby; due, I imagine, to the fear that she might refuse to type our manuscripts.

Did the editor rummage absent-mindedly for his glasses while they rested upon his forehead? "The Quiet Corner" did not spare him. Did Dr. Angelicus doze and nod over the manuscripts? In the weekly column he came in for *his*. Did Britannicus indulge his English traditions too openly? The "Corner" put him in his proper place. Primus Criticus was teased about his careful analyses; the Professor about his comprehensive researches; and Miss Boadicea about the office-supplies. I was torn to shreds over my weakness for poets. (I used to fear that if I returned any poem to its author, there might be a suicide laid at my door.)

This may sound as though we wrote only about ourselves (to be sure, the subject was a fascinating one to all of us!) but the "Corner" was usually under a page; and editorials, articles and criticism by members of the family continued to occupy a generous share of the magazine.

The advantage of being one of the contributors to the "Corner" was that, if you were torn to shreds one week, it might be your turn to write the column the next—and you could take your revenge in your own sweet way. After the paper was out and we had read the worst about ourselves, we'd all go out to luncheon together.

Those editorial luncheons were held religiously—but no, that's too solemn a word for something quite so festive—rather, they were held regularly once a week. In between laughs, sometimes the editorial fur would fly over this or that political theory, this or that book, but the fur never came out in clumps and no one was ever maimed. When the argument approached perilously to heat, someone would say something ridiculous—and we'd be choking over the entrée.

Returning to the office after those luncheons, "the Professor" could always be counted upon to be the first to settle at his typewriter and produce "copy," reams of it—a great assistance to the humble slave whose job it was to turn over to the printer sufficient material to fill all the columns. This, through Dr. Shuster's faithful production even on editorial luncheon days, was somehow miraculously achieved.

"Dr. Angelicus" and "Britannicus" were delightful foils for each other. It really seemed as though that pair had been made to order for THE COMMONWEAL's delectation. Antithetical in more than appearance, the handsome Dr. Angelicus was rotund and jolly; while Britannicus of the chiseled features and sensitive profile was tall, slender and ascetic. Each was the possessor of melodious speech and flawless diction. That of the Irish-English Britannicus had been flavored by English university training. The wit of Dr. Angelicus, like his appearance and his heart, was Gargantuan, with something elfin about it as well. It was mischievous without trace of malice; it was tipped with a culture as wide as the seven seas. It bubbled forth constantly from a fundamentally joyous nature—one which appreciated the good things of life, knew well how to enjoy them and even better how to share them. The humor of Britannicus had the rapidity and neatness of a rapier tempered by charity. His scholarship was classical; his reading, colossal. His fundamentally serious philosophy knew not the word "self"; he rejoiced only in the good fortune of others which he promoted at all times to the point of self-abnegation. His essence was spiritual.

For me and the others who worked with these two in those early intimate days of THE COM-

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MONWEAL, they will never be "the late Dr. Thomas Walsh, and the late Mr. Henry Longan Stuart," for their personalities, their minds, held an everlasting quality, the brilliance of which death has in no way dimmed for those who knew it and were warmed by its shining. In wide and varied journalistic careers, I believe they came to shine at their brightest under the large-minded editorship of Mr. Williams, who brought the best out of all his writers by leaving them free to write as they felt, and not rigidly within a "pattern."

It was Britannicus who introduced the custom of serving afternoon tea in the office, as a Britisher finding it a great solace toward the end of a long day. But since this practice only induced greater laughter and a wider pretext for jokes, we had at length regretfully to relinquish it. Besides, the sugar had a way of getting mixed up with the ink; the cream, with the proof-sheets. . . .

Messengers scurry in and out; down town, the presses are waiting.

Dr. Angelicus ruefully surveys a proof-sheet.

"Six lines short on my book-review?"

"Yes; kindly *ad lib,* to fill the page."

The Doctor reaches for the book reviewed, and heaving a heavy sigh, seizes a pencil. "Thank a merciful Heaven," he breathes, "for permitting reviewers the justifiable use of the quotation."

Primus Criticus peers at the proof over his shoulder.

"From the number of quotation marks it bears now, why didn't you spare yourself any effort and merely quote the entire chapter?"

The Doctor answers with a withering look.

"Here's your essay, Britannicus," intervenes Euphemia. "It's ten lines over. Please operate. Otherwise that page won't fit into the form."

"An American idiosyncrasy, this undue emphasis on the form-fitting," grumbles Britannicus, savagely wielding a pencil.

"That's because our forms can take fitting," retorts Angelicus. "You Britishers, now, are built. . . ."

Enter the Editor, with a manuscript just received, a two-page article on a timely subject.

"Pull out Jones; fill in with Smith," he says, tossing it on Euphemia's desk.

"All I do is pull out and fill. Mine isn't an editorial chair; it's a dentist's."

The Editor turns to the Professor with a request for an editorial on the timely subject.

"Do we have to have an opinion, even when it's dinner-time?" plaintively asks the Professor.

"Get busy, staff," says the Editor. "I'm buying you all a dinner. But no performance, no dinner."

"The Pope's Encyclical on Labor is ominously silent about employers who seduce their slaves to work over-time under the unfair temptation of a dinner," remarks Angelicus. "I'm writing to the Vatican."

"So am I," says the Editor.

"They really shouldn't be hungry," interrupts Miss Boadicea sweetly. "They eat all the pencils in the office."

"We'll have to go to a smart restaurant," offers Britannicus, "because Euphemia's dying to show off her new hat."

Pencils scrawl; typewriters race; copy falls into and satisfies the hungry maw of the press. Work finished, at last "The Quiet Corner" settles down—but never to quietude.

Happy days, swiftly passing days. Fortunate we, to have shared them—and the laughter!

Cavalier

By GRENVILLE VERNON

IN HER LATEST BOOK, "Men, Women, and Places," Sigrid Undset devotes a chapter to Henry Longan Stuart's "Weeping Cross" and entitles that chapter "Cavalier." In that one word she sums up not only the character of the novel's chief protagonist, but that of Stuart himself. For "Weeping Cross," though a work of fiction laid in seventeenth century New England, is the spiritual history of Henry Stuart. As long as nobility of soul exists there will never be "a last of the cavaliers." That race did not die with Robert E. Lee. Henry Stuart was a vital reminder of this fact. And yet gallant as Stuart always was, and gay as he could be at times, of all the men I have ever known he was the saddest and the loneliest. We who knew him intimately knew the tragedy of his life, a tragedy the more cruel in that it was owing in no measure to the man himself. And yet to say that he was the loneliest man I have ever known seems a paradox, for I have likewise known no man who had more or more steadfast friends. They were not one-way friendships, for Henry Stuart loved his friends as they loved him. Though eleven years have passed since his death, that friendship seems as vital and as ever present as it was in the days of his physical companionship. Henry Stuart was one of those touched at birth with the wand of sorrow, but he was a man whom sorrow rendered only the sweeter and the tenderer.

Henry Stuart's was not one of those natures for whom the material world did not exist, one of those who, like Newman, were born with *sacerdos* written on their brow. He was man endowed with human passions, and even human frailties—though the last were few—and because of these he loved and suffered. This was the man his friends knew and loved—and yet just at the moment when we

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thought we were closest to him, just as he turned on us that inimitable smile, something would suddenly seem to drift between, something like a veil. At those moments it was almost as if he faded from us, as if he were suddenly groping in a misty mid-region toward a light we could not see. It was those moments which gave us a clue to his great loneliness, which made us feel that there were two Henry Stuarts, one of this world and one who was not, one who knew that the things of this world were dust and ashes. I speak of these moments, not because they were frequent, but because they give a hint of the reason for some things in him which otherwise would be inexplicable. But how many were those other moments, moments when he was gay, or merely thoughtful, or those when his words became tinged with malice against pretense or falseness, or ringing with righteous passion against cruelty. For Henry Stuart wore his Catholic faith not as a garment for show. His religion informed every thought and every action of his life. His was a liberalism as true as it was intensely Catholic.

His career, though perhaps not colorful in an external sense, was yet varied and eventful. Born in London in 1875 of mixed Irish, Scottish and English ancestry, and of a Catholic family, he went to Ratcliffe College, and upon graduation entered into the work of journalism. After a few years in London he came to the United States, where on a western ranch he led the rough life of what was still the frontier. Following this he came East to Boston, where he joined the staff of the *Herald,* but when war broke out he at once returned to England and after a period of training, was dispatched to the Italian front where he served as an officer of the Royal Artillery, rising to the rank of captain. It was here that he made one of his characteristic remarks when asked by General Wilson to give his impressions of Caporetto. "All I can say about it, General, is that it was the greatest piece of one way traffic in history!" After the War, he returned to America, and was soon appointed New York correspondent of the Boston *Herald.* Overwork forced him at one time to leave New York, and for a few months he was editor of the Carroll County *Independent* of Center Ossipee, New Hampshire. It was largely through his efforts that a Catholic church was erected in that very Congregational town, the townspeople contributing generously to the fund because of their affection for their local editor.

It was about this time that he began writing for the book review section of the New York *Times,* and his critical articles soon became a feature of that paper. When *The Freeman* was established, he became one of its editors, brought to that position by Van Wyck Brooks, who had become one of his closest friends and deepest admirers. But the establishment of THE COMMONWEAL at last found for him the organ for which his training and inclination peculiarly fitted him. What THE COMMONWEAL became was in no small measure due to his efforts and writing. His clear thinking, his deep appreciation of what is best in the world's literature, his sound judgment enabling him to distinguish between the merely facile and the important, his profound Catholic faith, a faith in which the mystical was ever present, all summed up in an English style of great clarity and beauty, gave his contributions a stamp at once powerful and personal. It was at this period, too, that his masterly translations of Paul Claudel's "Letters to a Doubter" and Julian Green's first novel appeared, translations truly superb as specimens of English prose which yet were faithful to the spirit of the original. And then just as life, at least in its material rewards and popular recognition, was opening to him, death took him. It was the final tragedy in his earthly pilgrimage.

But admirable as Stuart was as critic and translator, his true claim to fame will rest on one book, a book of his youth—"Weeping Cross." If ever man created anything from his heart's blood so Stuart created Richard Fitzsimmon. Not that the novel was autobiographical in the sense that the things which happened to Fitzsimmon had happened to his creator, but in a far deeper sense, the sense of spiritual identity. Fitzsimmon is an Irish Catholic gentleman taken prisoner by Cromwell and exiled to New England, where he is made bond-servant to a rough Puritan. He falls in love with the Puritan's widowed daughter, Agnes Bartlett, and it was this love and Fitzsimmon's struggle against its sinfulness which is the heart of the story. "Weeping Cross" is a Catholic "Scarlet Letter," and that American Catholics allowed it to fall utterly unrecognized was another of Stuart's tragedies—and theirs. It was published in 1909, and though it received some critical commendation, this was practically all in non-Catholic circles. In discussing the reasons for its neglect, Fru Undset accuses American Catholics of being "infected by the puritanical system of suppression—which is entirely un-Catholic. The system, that is, which assumes that Christian virtues are best protected if we pretend to know nothing that threatens them."

It is a harsh but far from unjustified accusation. Here is a superb novel which simply because it dealt with the problem of sexual sin was thought unworthy of a place in Catholic literature. At least it was thought so by many; and not until it was republished a few years ago with a preface by Michael Williams did the American Catholic world begin to realize what a masterpiece it had neglected. It is to Fru Undset's eternal credit that she had recognized this neglect and has

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thrown all her prestige as a Catholic novelist and winner of the Nobel Prize into the attempt to make Catholics aware of one of the finest not only of Catholic, but of modern works of creative literature. Henry told me only a few days before his death that he intended modernizing the language of "Weeping Cross," and I told him then I thought it would be a mistake. Written in the style of the period, it is not merely a magnificent *tour de force;* it becomes the more so a living, breathing work of art. It is a monument which will endure.

Memory of Thomas Walsh

By MARY KOLARS

THE KEY of one's memory of Thomas Walsh is wholeness. General qualities of character are usually recalled easily, because it is the intelligence as much as the memory that does the recalling. But after almost a dozen years, the remembrance of Tom's looks and his ways, his turns of speech, his movements and laughter, even the sound of his voice, is as vivid as if they belonged to someone alive in the next street, whom you have seen today and will probably see tomorrow; and the reason for this must be that Tom put himself, in completeness, into almost everything he said or did. I cannot think he did this by formula or deliberation; it was merely his genius to be all of himself, wholly, all of the time. He scanted himself on no occasion, however casual or commonplace, but filled the moment as completely as the moment filled him. That is why every stray remembered moment about him retains such astonishing life; he put his mark upon it—*"Ex pede Herculem,"* Thomas himself would have said, who loved his Latin quotation. It is why people of every sort moved toward him spontaneously, some of them only partly aware of what charmed and drew them—people of every sort, however opinions or age or station or tempers may have divided them from one another. And it must have been, I think, one main reason why Tom himself was so contentedly at ease with life, so happy in a world where many, even of the noblest, find the going hard and bitter.

But not even the genius of temperament which enabled Tom in a sense to destroy the fleetingness of time by living each moment so completely was his most remarkable characteristic. That was instead a balance between the many sides of his being which no one but a Catholic, and a very particular sort of Catholic, could ever achieve. This truth about him has been seized and expressed with loving exactitude by more than one of his old and close friends—men who knew him for many years, and whose range of appreciation was widened by sharing in his full and happy personal life. The pages of THE COMMONWEAL carried such tributes of recognition after his death; and the issue of his "Selected Poems" from the Dial Press two years later (1930) contains in its introductory material interpretative essays by Michael Williams, John Bunker and Dr. Edward L. Keyes, which are little classics of accurate appreciation illumined by long affection. Each in its way makes the point that it was a combination of qualities rarely found combined which gave Thomas Walsh his stamp of uniqueness. But though those with the most right to speak of him, and the greatest aptitude for speaking, have thus definitively presented him to literary history, there is the temptation, having known him albeit in lesser degree, to essay one's own expression of his significance.

It was to me, then, the significance of opposites in equilibrium: I say in equilibrium rather than in fusion, because there was a real contrast between Tom's Catholic convictions, which were inflexible and absolute, not only in intellect but in instinct, and his tastes and temperament, which were those of one richly and joyously at home in this world. There was contrast: but there never was conflict. By some happy secret of balance—as secret, I think, to its fortunate possessor as to those who marveled at it from the outside—the sovereignty of his Catholic loyalty remained wholly secure even while his deep passion for the purely human side of culture, his zest for the varied, the beautiful, the strange in life, and his connoisseurship of its many forms of well-being, expanded with the untroubled richness one might look for in an attractive sort of pagan. But one cannot write the words down without a sudden, powerful sense of what they really suggest. They do not, of course, suggest any sort of pagan; they suggest that lost point of Catholic culture upon which the poet Chaucer stood, equally serene in the possession of both worlds. Thomas Walsh and Chaucer would have struck hands and hearts at once. Nor was the affinity in any sense an "achieved" one. Thomas modeled himself on no one. A literary man to the core, he was untainted by the literary vice of the pose. Chaucer's own self never grew more naturally into what he was intended to be.

Tom's other attainments have likewise been listed in the rolls of honor to which they pertain, long before this. Thomas the scholar followed his star as directly and surely as Thomas the personality. A deep and lasting love of Hispanic literature would surely not have been predicted of the son of an American family of Irish descent, even though this particular family represented a fortunate and unusual combination of culture and leisure. But so it was. From his early devotion to the letters of Spain and Spanish America, Thomas never wavered. His labors in the field of translation and adaptation were extraordinary, as his "Hispanic Anthology" testifies, and they were

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uniquely served by his own fine poetic gifts and his flawless taste. As unexpected and individual was his strong liking for Scandinavian literature. Perhaps the combination of the two tastes was somehow allied to his personal devotion to Saint Birgitta, who spent the latter half of her Swedish life in that other southern and Latin country, Italy. Equally notable was Thomas's service to English Catholic culture in his "Catholic Anthology," which exhibits a range of scholarship and a security of judgment it would be hard indeed to parallel.

That these important literary labors, as well as his own beautiful original poems and his more casual but large output of essays and reviews, should bring him fame was inevitable. That fact leads back to the consideration of his personality, for it recalls my own unusual experience with him. A late-coming editor to THE COMMONWEAL, where Thomas had been established from the start, I vaguely knew of Dr. Walsh as an eminence, a man of decorations and international renown. Little by little I came to put a concrete name to each item of that renown, and to realize how many of its impressive rewards were actually his. His advanced degrees from Georgetown, his own *alma mater,* and from Columbia had, evidently, been merely the springboards from which he had catapulted to acknowledged literary and scholarly importance. But it was never Thomas who enlightened on these things. There was a rosette in his lapel, but I think he hardly knew it. Certainly, no man's speech was ever less adorned with references to rosettes, conferred or in prospect. No datum of his many distinctions was ever gathered from him. This was due to a very real modesty. But I feel it was due even more to the trait already described—his intense capacity for the present. He was not really interested in what he had done but in what he was doing. He lived in no past save in the noble past of letters and history. The immediate book, person, poem, argument—especially argument—was what absorbed him.

No man ever enjoyed his indignations more. His happy wrath at this or that transgressor against taste or truth, burned and sparkled and rang. It warmed not only him, but everyone who came near; it could strike you to the spot fascinated. But though it was real, not feigned, it sometimes broke down in hearty laughter, because it was at bottom as genial as his happiness. Thomas was never one of the irascible brethren. He was not framed for ill-humor, as Jane Austen says of Elizabeth Bennett—and may he, from his couch of asphodel, forgive me the comparison!

Much of his talk was really notable; his interest, his wit and his power of making phrases were alike unflagging. But it is not even that one recalls of personal meetings with him so much as the emanation of humor, relish and benignity which conferred on those in company with him a really joyous sense of intellectual well-being. It was again the endowment of genius—and a blessed endowment indeed for one who loved companions as Tom did: he was always certain to have them.

Close your eyes and back, like magic, comes one of Tom's old days in THE COMMONWEAL. He sits at his desk, a portly, upright figure; the monocle, which by a complete triumph of personality has been accepted everywhere these twenty-five years, hanging at his lapel; his dress fastidiously ordered except for the powdering of cigarette ash that will stream all day long down that impressive façade—it being simply impossible for him to remember a cigarette again after he has put it between his lips. Above the desk is the little leprechaun statuette: an Irish man-of-letters, newly arrived, once refused to enter the office until it was removed, and Tom was so pleased with the episode that he obligingly shoved the little shoemaker into a drawer until the interview was over. It is fitting to say that Tom has other statues: one, a beautiful old madonna, of dark painted wood, given him on his visit to the Orinoco country, presides over his study at home. She checks and corrects the leprechaun perhaps as the *viveur,* the subtle savourer, in Tom is corrected by the other self within him that is deeper and more austerely wise.

The odds are that he is reading poetry manuscripts. From the first he has presided over the Poetry Page, giving it the stamp of taste and authority. The reading of these contributions is a labor he never grudges, and his comment is apt to be audible and sometimes highly informal. He dismisses a woman poet from the Village on the score of patently wrong diet: "Too much cheese," he murmurs running an astringent eye down the page. An epic from Saskatchewan breaks down even his poetic patience: *"Satis superque,"* he says with finality, laying its pound or so of typescript aside. Now comes a young nun, trying out a repertory of extremely modern images in pursuit of an allegedly spiritual ideal. Here Thomas is really outraged: "The cloven hoof in the convent garden!" he pronounces in a voice of definite repudiation.

He is sure to be interrupted uncountable times by the telephone. In an age encompassed and bedeviled by this instrument, Thomas thoroughly enjoys it. Any call may be from one of the legion of young people—native and foreign—whom he encourages in their work and helps with unregarding bounty: for he has that mark of the generous heart, that he loves youth. Or the call may be from yesterday's adversary in argument, who needs finishing off, or from a crony into whose ear can be poured anecdote or opinion or a long quotation which at the moment seems apposite.

Then there are visitors from outside, ranging from those who have made a pilgrimage to see Dr. Walsh to unseasoned young poets, whom he

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always treats with especial kindness. Today, however, a very seasoned poet—at least in years—comes in; she has with her, among other things, a large sheaf of verses, a sinewy determination to see them in print, and a muff. When she is finally exorcised, Thomas strides out majestically to the presiding secretary. "Miss ———," he directs, "never let in a woman with a muff again. She might have a revolver in it."

Now the editor charged with preparing copy comes in. She has been going over the "Quiet Corner," and has encountered a new name on which she seeks enlightenment. "Who," she asks, "is Brother Peregrinus?" Thomas twinkles at the opportunity. "Oh, he's the brother of *Siste Viator.*" Other editors with even less excuse drift in and out, just as the center of concourse in a household will be the room with the light and the fire. To Thomas, these are never interruptions—they are the very marrow of his day. He is one of the royal ones, and time cracks no whip over him; he put it prodigally at the service of his friends.

But even the leisurely and happy day may find him looking spent at its close. He never speaks of this, and however slowly he may at last move down the hall toward the elevator, he is erect and his cane swings with jaunty elegance from his arm. Some of those who work with him know, and knowing, grieve, that he lives under a constant threat, which may fall without warning, but his own mind is too full and his courage too complete to pause upon it. Tonight he will meet friends or listen to music or see a play; tomorrow he will be back at his desk once more—for, as one of his friends has since put it, "THE COMMONWEAL was the only shop that ever captured him."

I cannot even close, in Tom's way, with a Latin tag. *"Forsan et haec . . .,"* if it had summarized the good things instead of the bad, would have come closest; but Vergil put it into the future, and it would be my wish to record, with gratitude for one of the richest memories life can ever give me, that to recall all this indeed rejoices me now.

The Dark Virgin

Out of the deep, strong, steadfast Indian heart,
This calm and sweet embodiment of prayer:
These downcast eyes, serene as evening air,
And generous lips as if about to part
In words of comfort for whatever smart;
Calm face beneath the fluent Indian hair.
Witness of Juan Diego's humble trust,
The miracle roses on the barren hill
Impressed this image. Fresh it lingers still
Upon his mantle—doubt it if you must!
Even we strangers, from a world thrust
Deep into greed and hate; with reverent thrill
We pause to ask, for all hearts wrung and torn,
Your blessing, Little Mother of the Corn!

CLIFFORD GESSLER.

Views & Reviews

BY MICHAEL WILLIAMS

IT IS highly interesting and quite important news that Robert Hugh Benson's novel, "Lord of The World," is to be republished by Dodd Mead and Company, who hold the copyright, because, so I am informed, the publishers think it to be a "specially timely book." And so it is, since it deals with nothing less than the literal end of the world, preceded by the advent of Anti-Christ, the battle of Armageddon and the attempt to destroy all vestiges of the Christian religion; and such a vision, whether quite credible or not, is timely today because it agrees with a wide-spread belief that just such a series of events has begun.

To be sure, this is far indeed from being the only time in history when a similar belief spread through great multitudes; but that fact does not cramp the style of the new prophets of Doomsday who on the radio and through organized house-to-house propaganda and innumerable journals and pamphlets, are spreading the same contagion of expectancy of the end of all things. However, Monsignor Benson certainly did not regard himself as a prophet of the literal sort; nor, doubtless, do his publishers.

What he produced was an allegory, much in the manner of H. G. Wells, in which he clothed a strictly logical thesis in the habiliments of a highly sensational piece of fiction. How little he regarded it as his definite judgment on the way human affairs were tending when he wrote it, he proved by writing another prophetic thriller, "The Dawn of All," in which he took a diametrically different thesis, based upon the assumption that human affairs might be tending to the restoration of the world-wide supremacy of Catholic Christianity.

However, in a minor way, Benson certainly was highly prophetic in "Lord of the World," even if unconsciously. Sensational as was his plot, he managed to portray a number of developments in international affairs and in the manner in which operate the great inner forces that move humanity, which events today have actually reflected, or which they appear to portend, even if they do not follow the wild pattern traced for them in his novel. This is particularly notable in the case of his anticipation of that movement which many writers claim is being worked out in Germany and Russia and which has been named "Geo-Politics," the theory that both the geographical structure of the earth and the biological characteristics of its peoples must necessarily result in the final partition of the globe among a small number of dominant peoples, a sort of small federation of mighty empires, headed by the Nordic race.

In the most active version of this philosophy, the Nazi version, Hitler's Third German Reich is the predestined leader. In "Lord of the World" the struggle that eventually brings about this imperial solution of world politics, and of world industry and commerce, seems to have been successfully accomplished; although Germany, in the story, has not been alloted the chief part in the

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prpocess. But the equilibrium attained did not last, for the Oriental peoples begin to stir under the Emperor of the East, with a movement that threatens a world war—much as the same shadow now hangs over us, though from apparently different causes.

In Benson's novel, when it opens particularly, religion has been practically banished from any part in the direction or even the influencing of great world affairs. Europe and America have been completely secularized. Religion is tolerated as a merely private affair, and its practice has dwindled so that only small minorities keep the Faith alive, and education and journalism and literature and government are all mainly in the hands of men and women to whom the supernatural is a mere superstition. It is against this secularism of the Occident, Benson's story argues, that the religious mass of the Orient begins to revolt. Then the world war is prevented, after all, by the influence of America, directed and led by a wonderful Senator Felsenbergh—a sort of super-Woodrow Wilson combined with the magnetism of a super-Hollywood star. He is more than a great politician, however, of a single great empire. He is the world leader come at last to lead the reconciled nations and races of men in the paths of peace according to the purest and highest principles of enlightened humanitarianism and science. But simply because he is the perfect, natural man, Benson goes on to show, leader of humanity at a time when humanity considers itself self-sufficient and has politely but firmly dismissed God and Religion from all consideration, save toleration of the few superstitious persons who still cling to such ideas—why, he really is the Anti-Christ.

The most thrilling pages of the story are those which trace how the new ruler of the world of peace is compelled by the logic of his own philosophy to begin the purge of humanity of all the elements which interfere with secular progress, and the last great persecution of Christians is under way, Anti-Christ being opposed by the Pope— whose appealing figure was probably modeled after Pius X. But Benson, as a very patriotic Englishman, of course makes his Pope an Englishman. What Father Coughlin would have said about British propaganda, if he had been active when Benson was writing, may be well imagined!

Wild and fantastic as is "Lord of the World," however, the ultimate struggle in all forms of human affairs between the two final forms of human thought, the one which has belief in God as its motivating force and the contrary one which denies that belief, is exceedingly well brought out in its moving pages.

That such a struggle is going on today in a more objectively manifest form than at any time since the great wars of religion, is, I think, quite certain, and is becoming more and more recognized for what it is. The reissue of Robert Hugh Benson's most readable story will do much to strengthen this concentration upon the fundamental issues which we now face as the nations rise against each other, and against God, and when all the problems which complicate the scene are subordinated to the central problem of the religious nature of the world revolution now in full stride.

Communications

WAR

Seattle, Wash.

TO the Editors: Today's feast of the great martyrs and healers of the East, Saints Cosmas and Damian, reminds me of the duty of Christians as set forth in Christ's parable of the Good Samaritan.

The sale of arms to the belligerent nations on one hand, and on the other hand the rigid precautions that this sale strictly remain business and never become a serious entanglement or participation in the international "Civil War" between proletarian and plutocratic nations in Europe, this new policy may draw reproaches on this country from both sides and revive the old accusations of selfishness, hypocrisy and commercialism which one heard so often during and after the last war. . . .

Yet it would be easy to take a truly Christian attitude in this conflict, if we did not sit in judgment, but acted like the good Samaritan.

Can't we bring about a vigorous campaign for this idea? I mean, we could have solemn requiem Masses in all parishes for the dead of *all* belligerent nations once a month, sponsored by the different national groups who would then make a demonstration of their true Christian spirit. We could adopt war orphans on both sides, support refugees from both sides, help to build sanatoria for the war victims, feed the hungry and clothe the naked in both camps.

Each individual Catholic could pledge himself to strive in conversations and arguments to advocate always the viewpoint of the Good Samaritan and contribute a penalty to a fund for every unkind judgment on the belligerent nations. The sum thus contributed could be sent to the Pope to help him to build up a war relief bureau. Can't we do at least as much as the Quakers have been doing?

Even those among us who are not organized pacifists will agree that this would be a sensible and feasible program. THE COMMONWEAL should take the lead.

REV. H. A. REINHOLD.

Chicago, Ill.

TO the Editors: I read with interest Jacques Maritain's letter "To My American Friends" (October 13), and though there may be several debatable facts contained therein from an American viewpoint, it is my opinion that Maritain is quite correct in assuming that our civilization will be saved despite the horror and misery of the coming war.

A culture dies only when the people become morally, spiritually, idealistically decadent. When a culture is willing to exist at the expense of its ethical ethos, it will degenerate. . . . Had France and England continued to live under the "diabolical hypocrisy" which they seemed to be doing, Western civilization from every consideration would to all intents and purposes cease to exist.

We, in America, may as well face the brutal fact that the only way by which caesarism as symbolized by fas-

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cism and communism can be wiped out is by resorting once again to the primitive methods of *blood* and *violence*. The dynamism of our civilization is only a vehicle of our culture; and if we, as the embodiments of that culture, are no longer willing to die for its continuance, then that culture will die, even of its own weight.

Maritain is aware of immense life forces. He is not writing for the immediate moment in our civilization. The spirit of freedom, of morality, of Christianity, of democracy is in desperate danger, are we to sit idly by and let the forces of tyranny triumph?

STUART BRENT.

Cambridge, Mass.

TO the Editors: It is my definite conclusion that those who oppose the repeal of the Neutrality Act and even those who wish to maintain "cash and carry" refuse to face the facts. For the facts are that the chances of Britain and France being defeated by Hitler are very considerable. In view of that fact and in view of the further fact that the majority of the American electorate would, without any question, favor entrance of this country into the war if there are signs of Britain and France losing, it seems to me that vigorous support of the British and French in the hope that they will not be defeated by Hitler but on the contrary will be able to bring this unhappy war to as speedy a conclusion as possible is our one and only chance of staying out of it ourselves. The longer the war lasts the more likely we are to get in. Therefore anything that we do to prolong it, and undoubtedly the maintenance of the present Neutrality Act has that effect, the surer we are to get in. No one could regret more sincerely or feel more acutely the very unhappy pass to which things have come which force me and others to this conclusion, but the facts are not of our making.

It seems to me that within Germany the people are apprehensive about their own Nazi Government. The schism between the conservative, war-weary majority and the hotheads still holds. Now is the time to drive home a mighty blow into this crack. We cannot do it without the repeal of the embargo.

CARL J. FRIEDRICH.

New York, N. Y.

TO the Editors: Father Owen McGuire's letter on "Neutrality and Peace" (October 20) well summarizes the enigmatic position in which we all find ourselves at the moment. . . .

There is now generally apparent, unfortunately, a fatalistic attitude that our full participation in this war is inevitable. It is an idea that is largely the result of an understandable anti-Hitlerism, of English propaganda and the effect of the herd-like movement of Washington officialdom toward war. Popularizing our participation, therefore, is well under way.

In this connection it may be well to indicate that the embargo repeal represents a particular danger to our peace. This is not so much because of the peace-promoting value of the embargo, or its repeal, but because of the emotional relationship of repeal to a war attitude. The repealists have taken particular pains to give it this emotional relationship and to identify us with the imperialism of France and England. . . .

This brings to my mind an incident after the close of the last war, when I was a guest at a dinner to a visiting English monsignor. He had been one of the many foreign visitors from the allied countries to the United States during the war, and together with a well-known French abbé, had helped intensify pro-ally sentiment among American Catholics.

The war being over he could afford to be candid. Replying to a question as to England's method and purpose in Ireland, where the Black and Tans were then engaged in strafing the population, he gave an explanation that was entirely and frankly imperialistic. Someone indignantly asked if that was what England meant by democracy. His answer was illuminating and is very pertinent to the present situation. He said: "England is not really very much interested in democracy. We talk about it to Americans because we think they like it."

We are getting large and affecting doses of this same topic of democracy at the moment. . . . We are still supposed to "like it." That this really cloaks a cynical imperialism engaged in a struggle to dominate Europe is not supposed to be very evident to Americans, although Colonel Charles Lindbergh's warning still stands unimpeached. There is crying need of more voices being raised to emphasize the special destiny of the United States and its separateness from the imperialist policies that are common to large European powers, and which, as such, are not our particular concern.

BARRY BYRNE.

Notre Dame, Ind.

TO the Editors: Though I am not one of those personal friends Maritain referred to in his article in THE COMMONWEAL (October 13), I am one of his many admiring readers. Also I have had the good fortune to hear him speak and spoken of. And for that reason I have always appreciated his sincerity.

However, despite my admiration for Maritain, I must admit that his article disturbed me. Not that anything he said is not true. But, perhaps because what he said is inexpedient. . . .

Not many days before Maritain's article appeared in your magazine, I had the occasion to hear Father M. C. D'Arcy speak on the crisis in morals. And he too did not fail to remind us how terrible it would be for Christianity in Western civilization if communism and nazism were victorious in Europe.

As I have said, I do not doubt the sincerity of Maritain, or of Father D'Arcy. But it is possible that they are being used. However, if I seem unduly suspicious, it is so only because I am as concerned for Christian civilization in America as they are for Christian civilization in Europe. Perhaps if either would write an article on the conditions for a just war as applied to modern warfare, there would be less occasion to suspect that they are being used.

A. J. KATAUSHAS.

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The Stage & Screen

The Man Who Came to Dinner

THIS IS another Kaufman-Hart success. They seem to flow in as regularly as the tides, and if they are unimportant in the realm of literature or psychology, they are theatrical entertainment at its height. It is not even a secret of Polichinelle that "The Man Who Came to Dinner" is about Alexander Woollcott; it has been proclaimed from the housetops and with no protests from Mr. Woollcott himself. Sheridan Whiteside is a lecturer, wit, and friend of the great who gets marooned in a midwestern town and proceeds to insult everyone about him. The plot of the play concerns his attempts to break off the engagement of his secretary to a young journalist in order that his secretary may remain with him. Whiteside is an egotist, as cruel in his tongue as he is selfish in his life, even though he does think Christmas is his own private property. But he is a master of invective, and it is this invective which is the backbone of the play. The play itself is a farce-comedy; the second act is a masterpiece of construction. The first and third acts are perhaps less well molded, and the introduction of the mummy-case just a little too much to swallow. If it were sound-proof it would also be air-proof, with the result that the last act ought to end in a tragedy for the actress immured in it. But then the play is a farce and we must let it go at that. It is replete with riotous situations and Woollcottian remarks. Moreover it is superbly acted by Monty Woolley as Whiteside, by Edith Atwater as the secretary, by John Hoysradt as a thinly concealed Noel Coward, by Ruth Vivian as Lizzie Borden alias Harriet Stanley, by Theodore Newton as the young journalist and by a young American actress who has returned to her native land after becoming one of the toasts of the London stage—Carol Goodner. Unless I am very much mistaken, Miss Goodner is of star material. (*At the Music Box.*)

Ladies and Gentlemen

WHEN HELEN HAYES and Philip Merrivale are off the stage this adaptation of a drama by L. Bush-Fekete is mainly a series of stunts and wisecracks evolved by the adaptors, Charles MacArthur and Ben Hecht. Some of the stunts are funny in a vaudeville way, and some of the wisecracks are too, though one or two are inexcusably vulgar. But as a play it is very light-waisted indeed. If it were not for Miss Hayes—but then Miss Hayes is present, and plays with all her radiance and charm, all her mastery of emotion and change of mood. She makes of her love scenes, and especially the balcony one, something which will never be forgotten by those who see them. In them, too, she has a splendid partner in Mr. Merrivale, whose sincerity, and simulation of feeling by understatement is masterly. It is one of the best things I have seen him do. It is a pity that such acting as his and Miss Hayes's should be devoted to a play of such basic triviality. There is good acting too by William Lynn, Frank Conlon, Evelyn Varden, and Connie Gilchrist. Miss Gilchrist made a real character out of stock material. If she doesn't look out, Hollywood will get her, for she is a real comedian. (*At the Martin Beck Theatre.*)

GRENVILLE VERNON.

Garbo Laughs!

AT LONG LAST, Greta Garbo brings her beauty, individuality and deep voice back to the screen. And as a comedienne she sparkles—with the help of Director Ernst Lubitsch who knows how to give comedy a deft touch to keep it alive. He delays her entrance for the first half hour; then in she comes—a severe, sour-pussed Soviet investigator, in Paris to look into the activities of three comic, Communist commissioners. Former nobleman Melvyn Douglas, confused by the scientific approach of Comrade Ninotchka, teaches her that love must not be analyzed out of existence. When Garbo learns that she is more than a tiny cog in the wheel of evolution, she becomes human, laughs, dances, drinks and melts into the Douglas arms. It is not the thin, dragged-out story that puts over "Ninotchka," but the good acting and high, occasionally strained, humor. With Communists as the butt of jokes, this humor varies from bitter satire like Garbo's remark on the latest purge, "Now we have fewer but better Communists," to burlesque like the May Day parade with thousands of pictures of Stalin, to the slap-stick of the three comics. Ina Claire, a most welcome addition to "Ninotchka," knows exactly what to do with snappy repartee; and she does it.

Imperial Russia is the subject of "Rasputin" (French with English titles); but it is difficult to understand why this seventh film should have been made about the mysterious, faking peasant-monk who influenced the Romanoffs, unless to give Harry Baur a chance to play the meaty rôle. Mr. Baur rises to the occasion with a fine performance, but still fails to make Rasputin believable, perhaps because "this holy devil" with his doctrine of sin, this mad healer steeped in lechery and hypocrisy, is unbelievable to Western minds. Marcel L'Herbier's heavy, slow direction lacks movement.

No simpering love story tones down the forceful prison drama, "Mutiny in the Big House." The somber note is relieved only by the prisoners' own grim humor and the humane touch of a prison priest, excellently portrayed by husky Charles Bickford. Based on Martin Mooney's factual story about Father Patrick O'Neil who quelled a prison riot and break in Colorado in 1929, this picture, under William Nigh's direction, gains its strength through sincere performances and the heavy, slow realistic build-up that leads to the exciting outburst. Bickford's Father Joe minces no words in his efforts to have a soul, save a life, save the hardened convict from destruction and the weak first-timer from becoming a confirmed criminal. Against severest odds, he does not get far with tough Barton MacLane; but with many other prisoners, with young, resentful Dennis Moore, the priest accomplishes much. Although its story goes overly theatrical, this film makes a strong plea for intelligent treatment of prisoners.

PHILIP T. HARTUNG.

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Written from the Ridge

DEAR EDITORS: You remember we talked the other day and you said I might try my hand at pieces for THE COMMONWEAL. I wanted to have some title which would suggest "Letters From a Convert," but that's a rather forbidding title. To me it would suggest essays either too humble or too brash and of course they could be both.

But the Ridge is nothing more than the side road on which I live and lose letters that should be answered and leap away like an antelope at noon to commute to the city. On a clear day from a high hill one hundred yards away (almost within walking distance) I can see the tallest turrets of the magical city. But just looking does neither me nor New York any particular good. Accordingly I commute.

There is something to be said for this way of life. I am not acquainted with any newspaper which will suffice to keep the traveler engrossed all the way from Stamford to Grand Central. Regularly I read two columns—my favorite and one I do not like. Then I feel that I have the gist of all the commenting journalists and I turn away from entertainment and begin to think.

There can be such a thing, I believe, as commuter's conversion. On the road to Damascus a great light came suddenly, but to us small fry who travel in the New Haven smoker convictions arrive rather more slowly. A sincere conviction, at times, is pieced out of little things, memories and experiences, which come together after many years. Birds which scatter in the morning feel an impulse to return to common ground at nightfall.

It seemed to me strange that a decision of an individual as to religion should stir up so large an amount of protest in a land where it has become axiomatic to say that a man's beliefs belong to himself alone. Many of the letters were of the same tenor. The assertion of the atheist or the agnostic that he stands for tolerance seemed a little less than accurate because I drew a great many missives in which I was almost ordered to sit down forthwith and read in its entirety "The Bible Unmasked."

But for the most part the complaints said in kindly effect, "You grow old and fat. You have reached your dotage and fear of death has laid its grip upon you."

Now it is quite true that I recognize the fact of death as a problem which man must face and solve in his own spirit. Yet here again this is no sudden thing. I was more fearful at fifteen than at fifty. And in city and in country no one with open eyes can dodge the palpable. The woods back of the house swarm with life, and dissolution is just as active. One finds the spent songbird on the ground on those same mornings that his brothers sing overhead. And the tides of flood and ebb in the maples just beyond the door are too obvious to be neglected.

I can see nothing senile in an eagerness to find an answer and a pattern by which one may evaluate and explain these performances. To pass by on the other side and say, "This is nothing to me," would seem to me a dull sort of reaction.

In the country, of course, the promise of resurgence is more plainly set than in the streets of the city. Death comes to rural Connecticut with more dignity and more promise than along the housing lines of Manhattan. Very vividly I still remember a boy on the block who was crushed beneath a truck when he and I were five or six years old. We stood gaping, aghast but in a morbid way excited as the ambulance came down our street. And it was impossible for me then to think of my dead friend in terms of later fulfillment. Fear had come to the brownstone fronts of West Eighty-Seventh Street. And without faith the fear is not so much the dread of extinction but the horror which one feels at the aimlessness of a world wholly unmotivated. That sort of world has all the bleakness of bad theatre, bad art and jumbled composition.

It may seem silly, but I believe that my religious instinct was sharpened and deepened when I began to paint. Naturally, I would hardly expect the Church to shoulder any part of the responsibility for my landscapes. I paint for the fun of it and the discomfiture of my friends who receive the little masterpieces neatly framed in lieu of Christmas presents. Because of a great tradition even the most spurious of amateurs found himself early making efforts to capture some glint of such subjects as Easter morning. And even when I was licked by a complete lack of draftsmanship, I did still endeavor to capture the mood roundabout. I don't like snow and black trees and the frozen brook. And so on Winter mornings I would clear a space in which to operate and splash the canvasboard with all the green and yellow which would presently return to Hunting Ridge.

I have no skill with guns or any liking for them, but I've done my share of hunting in the woods behind the pond. I have wanted what every man wants. And most of all I think he seeks comradeship in both faith and action. Among the letters which came to me were quite a few which upbraided me upon a wholly false assumption. These writers seemed to think that in conversion to Catholicism I was in some way denying a lively interest and adherence to the principles of trades-unionism.

This is a wholly topsy-turvy conception. I have been active in the affairs of the American Newspaper Guild because I believe in collective bargaining and because I have always felt, as any veteran newspaper man must feel, that the craft is one in which we shall all be better off in body and in spirit through the development of brotherhood.

There is no turning away when the union man joins the Church. It is the logical step forward. A progressivism which is purely secular has distinct limitations in the warmth of fellowship which it can achieve. There are clashes, quarrels and wounds among the members of any union. If the organization is democratically run, such happenings are inevitable. But it is neither good nor necessary that scars should remain. I have seen disruption continue because of the lack of that enduring warmth which is not to be achieved without a fellowship of fervor. Man was not meant to live, or die, or bargain alone.

It is quite true that many come saying, "All men are brothers," and mean precisely nothing. Action and faith

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must go hand and hand. And here in America, particularly, men must rid themselves of that constraint which afflicts us when we speak of love save in its romantic phases. Hate is like quicksilver in a broken thermometer. It will run all over the floor to the most remote corners and you simply cannot get it back into the container.

I do not want to stray into any of the vulgarizations which have cropped up in efforts to picture the personality of Jesus in terms of modern business and industrial life. I still tingle with a kind of shocked embarrassment when I remember a line from a book by Bruce Barton in which he said that "Jesus Christ was the most popular dinner guest in Jerusalem." It suggested Buchmanism to me rather than Christianity. But I see no reason why labor should not eagerly and literally follow the lead of Jesus the organizer.

HEYWOOD BROUN.

Books of the Week

Moment in Time and Space

The Hundredth Year, by Philip Guedalla. New York: Doubleday, Doran and Company. $3.00.

THE HUNDREDTH YEAR—1936—follows precipitately "The Hundred Years" which the highly articulate Philip Guedalla just finished chronicling in his highly individual style. Mr. Guedalla considers 1936 the pivotal year around which our times are turning, and, with our after-knowledge, the events and scenes he ably portrays certainly seem of extreme significance.

The year itself, in the author's summary, is knitted together by the personal and official history of King Edward VIII. This personal element, so useful in enlivening a book, is offered as important in itself and as a symbol for more anonymous forces working in British and world history. Philip Guedalla is certainly a King's man and there is more than a suspicion of sentimentality in his treatment of "the King's problem," and in the central position he gives the part of King-Emperor. The historian's superior attitude of censure toward people who disapprove of multiple marriage is at no point based on anything stronger than English lavender.

A partisan of the King, he finds a splendid villain in Stanley Baldwin. When the year is finished, the rôle is disturbingly convincing. In the case of that Conservative leader, muddling through—or simply waiting—was carried to an extreme which even England (to whom, the author reminds us in the words of Galsworthy, "you must remember that you always have to give time") must now recognize as dangerous.

These personal elements are of central importance in Mr. Guedalla's historiography, for he undertakes to recreate the past through people acting and observing and simply being looked at. It is psychological history and reads like an historical novel or pageant. One is given no deep understanding of why the choices are presented to his characters, but the immediate, human reasons impelling them between the choices are almost always persuasive. This is so even in such ticklish cases as those connected with the outbreak of the Spanish war, the march into the Rhineland, the American election, the conquest of Ethiopia. . . . 1936 was a big year. The motivation of Hitler —the greatest issue of the kind involved—is least ade-

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quately supplied in the short retrospect of his career. That he yearned for the Reich because there, as in German Austria, the people "worshipped in the same Catholic tradition," is a wild bit of testimony and confusing more than clarifying.

The Philip Guedalla style and general attitude are what have made him the popular writer he is. First there is that personal approach mentioned above, writing of lofty historical figures as though he knew them intimately; almost the way an upper form boy in a prep school knows a young friend of the family's from home who has just entered the lower grades. There is something of civilized disillusionment which borders at times on less civilized cynicism. The idea of progress inherent in much of the mood seems to be simply change toward the ability to disagree comfortably. The actual literary style, so lively and so readable, is an individual creation which embodies clarity, simplicity and a number of mannerisms. Unexpected and frequently ironic adjectives are most noticeable. At their best these adjectives not only stimulate the reader but add a metaphor as well as a description to the prose. The second most evident device is the repetition in succeeding paragraphs of a phrase which gradually is given increasing content until it becomes a slogan or symbol summing up the meaning of a larger section of the history. Such in this book, for instance, is "Someone they knew," referring to Edward VIII, and Marshal De Bono's reiterated reply to Mussolini, "Very good." "The Hundredth Year" reads in no tragic style, but the author shows, with poignancy if not deep pathos, that 1936 was indeed a tragic twelve months for our world.

PHILIP BURNHAM.

CONTEMPORARY SOCIAL PROBLEMS

The Economic Bases of Peace, by Earnest Minor Patterson. New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company. $2.50.

THIS THOUGHT-PROVOKING study of world economic conditions written in the summer of 1939 merits the attention of every reader who is trying to understand the economic dislocations that have contributed to the present tensions and wars that exist both in Asia and Europe. It would hardly seem possible that one could read this book without a clarifying of one's own thinking in regard to the subjects discussed.

The author is frank in stating his own attitudes, and whether you agree or disagree you will be stimulated in following his approach to the question. In the introduction a simple outline of the attitudes assumed is given. This includes a conviction that human beings firmly believe that wars should be eliminated; that economic dislocations are causes of wars; a realization that human beings are but to a slight extent rational; the need for dealing with causes rather than symptoms; a firm belief in the importance of peaceful adjustments of international disputes; and finally an admission of the extent of economic strain in the world, even in peace times.

Without attempting to state all the worth-while discussions, I would call attention especially to excellent brief accounts of the economic interdependence of nations, of questions of population pressure and of increased industrialization, all tending to intensify the economic strain even in times of peace. The reader is made conscious of the complexity of the problem and hence of the impossibility of a simple remedy. After clearly showing this tremendous interdependence of nations, the author discusses some of the consequences, such as the increasing rôles of government, the growth of control of one kind or another, the interrelationship of lives in our highly industrialized world.

Chapters are devoted to "Immediate Problems" and "Long-run Problems." These include such provocative questions as our new position as a creditor nation; the increased tempo of economic life and the resulting instability and insecurity; the passing of the laissez-faire philosophy; the decline of competition; the increase of government controls as they are called upon for increased expenditures.

The reader's thinking will be clarified by a thoughtful study of the chapter on "What Do We Want?" Here the author lists some points upon which there is substantial agreement. These include the desire to avoid military conflict; policies to minimize economic conflict; increase of world productivity; demand for security (economic as well as against an aggressor) and a strong feeling against extreme economic inequalities. After the study of "What Do We Want?" comes a brief analysis of various approaches to these goals. Chapters cover such approaches as economic nationalism, internationalism, autarchy, regionalism and world economy.

The whole book is a challenge to the honest, thoughtful reader to recognize the fact that the economic world has changed in recent years and to adjust his thinking accordingly. The economic bases of peace demand this calm appraisal of existing conditions and a wise adjustment between the old political and economic procedures on the one hand and the newer approaches which may break with some of our cherished beliefs.

Read it for yourselves. ELIZABETH MORRISSY.

CRITICISM

D. H. Lawrence and Susan His Cow, by William York Tindall. New York: Columbia University Press. $2.75.

SUSAN to Professor Tindall is the figurehead of the naturalism to which Lawrence turned after Darwin, Huxley and Haeckel had undermined his Congregationalist upbringing. Fortunately this study is more comprehensive than its title, as for any scholar to devote two years to the raw material of Lawrence's ideas would seem as inappropriate as Lawrence's own recognition of Susan's "cowy mystery" or her "changeless cowy desireableness." Such expressions, which Auden calls Lawrence's "wonderful wooziness," may come as a shock to serious Lawrentians, but what makes Lawrence Exhibit A to the student of twentieth century metaphysical-literary tendencies is that his facile imagination, his restlessness and unhappy neuroses drove him to chameleon-like religious metamorphoses.

He bent like a thin and bearded wheat stalk to the current wind of thought as, although he depreciated mentality and worshipped the mindlessness of vegetables and peasants, he himself read incessantly. Wordsworth and Emerson lured him to pantheism; from Burnet's "Early Greek Philosophers" came the idea of flow and flux which crystallized into the negative and positive "polarity" of his doctrine of love. The savages of Cooper and Melville piloted by Rousseau introduced him to the splendid simplicity of primordial man, and from the animism of the New Mexican Indian he leapt to primitivism with the archeologists. After Frazer's "Golden Bough" and Jane Harrison's "Ancient Art and Ritual," he dreamed of Egypt with Flinders Petrie, Atlantis with Frobenius, Peru with Prescott; a personal contact in Mexico City primed

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him for "The Plumed Serpent." From reverence of Quetzalcoatl, he passed over the bridge of Jung's "Psychology of the Unconscious" to the realm of the occult under the aegis of Madame Blavatsky. Leaving with her Yeats and A. E., Lawrence forged on to visions of himself as a Messianic hero-dictator who would lead men from socialism, Catholicism and finance back to primitive, thinkingless mysteries. "My great religion," said Lawrence, "is a belief in the flesh and blood as being wiser than intellect."

Professor Tindall feels that in spite of all our outward modernism, our literature still belongs to the age of Wordsworth, a decadent romanticism that is "apt to assume the shape of some bootleg religion." Excluding those who find shelter in some established institution like Spender and Lewis in Communism and T. S. Eliot in the Anglican Church, true romanticists to him are of two types: those who seek sentimental refuge and escape in a past or future order and those who make themselves a religion out of disorder.

Mr. Tindall's persistence in unearthing Lawrence's literary background to serve as an index of his period provides flint for the snap of his wit and a raciness in punning unfamiliar to pundits. "Never mind" is the title of the chapter describing the typical Lawrence heroine's delight in gamekeepers, gypsies and grooms; this is followed by "Sermons in the Stone Age" and "Susan Unveiled." Mr. Tindall also describes Lawrence as having "the sensitivity of a cat—the nervousness of Donald Duck," which seems to imply that the Professor does not expect his critiques to survive a decade. We do. In spite of untidiness in construction and a lack of chronology in development, his book is a super-smart commentary.

He sums up Lawrence as a novelist who never wrote a first rate novel, but the best of travelogues; the failure is partly due, he feels, to Lawrence's didactic purpose. T. S. Eliot has said that literature is now a substitute for religion, and so is religion. Mr. Tindall's contribution is that those to whom Wagner seems profound have found in Lawrence their perfect expression. Like Susan, when Lawrence was most foolish, he was most solemn.

EUPHEMIA VAN RENSSELAER WYATT.

HISTORY

Our Land and Our Lady, by Daniel Sargent. New York: Longmans, Green and Company. $2.50.

WITHOUT attempting anything so ambitious, or formidable, as a history of the Catholic Church in America, Daniel Sargent, by concentrating his focus upon Our Lady, has contrived to throw into high relief the Catholic aspect of the American epic. It is as a work of art rather than a work of scholarship that his book must be judged.

I say this at once because there will probably be readers who, missing much that they would expect to find in a formal "history," may feel that what he has to say is inadequate. It can be considered so only from the dry-as-dust point of view, and it must be admitted that Mr. Sargent is never dull. But he is able to achieve his happy and easy art by virtue of a scholarship so bred in the bone that it is able to dispense with the usual apparatus. He could not have written his book were he not learned, and have learned his story by heart. Nor perhaps could have he written it without that background of Boston Unitarianism from which he found his way into the Church. He is grounded—one is tempted to say almost equally grounded—upon rock-ribbed New England and the Rock of Peter.

He has a word in passing to say of modern Puritanism —that dainty, refined, cold, remote, ineffectual Puritanism with which he is acquainted. "This complete confidence in human goodness—with all the impossible contradictions it involves—has become the religion of Puritans of today, as Calvinism was the religion of Puritans yesterday. There has been a complete theological change in the religion of Protestants in the United States. Once to them the Catholics were too lax. Now they are too austere."

It would be impossible—and is, besides, unnecessary—to attempt any summary of this beautiful and moving book. It touches in turn upon Columbus, the Conquistadores, the French missionaries, the settlement of Maryland; and it singles out for special treatment such engaging figures as De Smet and that Prince Gallitzin who was known to his Pennsylvania parishioners as plain "Mr. Smith." Such characters as are introduced are brought to life, even if they only appear for a paragraph, with the vivid phrase, so that much more of the truth of history is contained in this distillation of it than in most exhaustive and exhausting tomes. It is enough that we see Du Luth praying to an Indian, Catherine Tekakwitha, to cure his gout. It is enough that we catch this glimpse of Prince Gallitzin: "He could no longer walk. He could no longer—ex-cavalryman—ride. Cheerful as a child in his last winters he was drawn hither and thither on a sled." Insight and an assured simplicity make this a really notable book.

In reviewing other books by Daniel Sargent, I have remarked that he had what were to me some irritating mannerisms of style, though those books I nevertheless thought admirable. No such qualifications need be raised here. All is perfect lucidity and almost all is perfect tact. An astonishingly difficult task has been performed in such a way that "Our Land and Our Lady" may be safely produced as a major miracle should Daniel Sargent's cause for beatification ever be instituted. As it is he has put all American Catholics—and all Americans—deeply in his debt.

THEODORE MAYNARD.

Financial Questions in United States Foreign Policy, by James W. Gantenbein. New York: Columbia University Press. $3.25.

THE importance of this book is that it furnishes concise and authoritative analyses of several of the more important groups of financial matters of an international character which are today of great concern to our government in the conduct of foreign affairs. Foreign exchange controls, intergovernmental debts, foreign dollar bonds in default, international double taxation and the increasing necessity of governmental financing of foreign trade —all emphasize the tragic importance of financial problems in international affairs.

JOHN J. O'CONNOR.

The Politics of the Balkans, by Joseph C. Roucek. New York: McGraw-Hill Book Co. $1.50.

TODAY, when war and diplomacy are shifting boundary lines and with them the Balance of Power in Eastern Europe, the small Baltic states are in the immediate spotlight of interest; but the five Balkan states, possible targets of German or Russian fire, share some of it. This small book, one of a series of textbook studies of contemporary governments, briefly surveys the internal economic and political development of the Balkan coun-

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tries and pays special attention to the effect of these internal conditions on their foreign policies.

The first two and the last two chapters are the most useful part of the work. The former compare social and governmental conditions among the countries; the latter deal with Macedonian factions and the importance of Germany in Balkan foreign policies. The possible influence of Russia is hardly mentioned, the waning influence of France is treated summarily. The remainder of the book, consisting of separate chapters on each of the five states, is less useful because it is too much reduced, in a style of narrative comparable to that of some of our weekly news digests. In his effort to be concise, the author has marshaled his events into sharp factual statements, so terse as to leave no clear understanding of them. Whole régimes begin and end in a small paragraph. Revolutions without apparent support or reason are planned and effected by characters who are mere names on a page, by means that remain mysterious. The personal whim of a politician or a king works magic, but only transitory magic. As a result political movements pass like a flow of indiscriminate images behind a misty glass. Seeming inconsistencies are unexplained. For example, the present King Boris of Bulgaria is presented as one who is endeared to the people by his two "specialties" of engineering and cordiality, and as one who "has given constitutional methods a careful trial." At the same time he is represented as a crafty and "masterful political tactician" who within three years is "forced" to overthrow the constitutional system, but who personally brought about the division and downfall of his military "liberators" and achieved a position where he could "liquidate" the two military factions; a constitutionally minded monarch looks on as a "spectator" while Macedonian factions fight to the death in the streets below his window. In the perusal of lists of political assassinations, one wonders whether any officers of the law ever attempted to arrest known murderers; no hint of such legal action appears, save as political revenge.

There are useful statistical résumés of raw materials in Balkan resources, nationality tables and tables of religious statistics. Each chapter is followed by a bibliography of wide range, in annotated support of statements made. The text may in this fashion serve the purpose of a directive guide to reading. ELIZABETH M. LYNSKEY.

The Trampling Herd, by Paul I. Wellman. New York: Carrick and Evans. $3.00.

THERE was a flourishing cattle industry in the Southwest long before the white man set his foot on Roanoke Island or Plymouth Rock. This lively, colorful, dramatic history of the industry begins with Cortez and ends with dude ranching today. It is a valuable addition to frontier literature.

MISCELLANEOUS

Green Grows the City, by Beverley Nichols. New York: Harcourt Brace and Company. $2.50.

BEVERLEY NICHOLS fans and well-to-do backyard gardeners will like this mildly amusing account of the transformation of a tiny triangle of land built up from city dumps into a little oasis of a formal pattern. Mr. Nichols hugely enjoyed his conquest of the wilderness, particularly his struggles with an irate neighbor of pantheistic and supervisory bent. The author always won, it seems. He did succeed in creating an escape in the city. The book, on the whole, is reticent in the British manner; it makes no pretense of interpreting deeply personal experience for the rest of the world. But Mr. Nichols's allusions to his life in his tiny home with his garden and his cats seems to have a sort of pathetic wateriness about it. Of greatest general interest are the intimations of the satisfaction to be had from cultivating flowers and shrubs, ferns and grasses and planning and realizing an artistic ensemble. The author appears to be good as architect and workman. EDWARD SKILLIN, JR.

POETRY

Poems of F. García Lorca, with English Translation by Stephen Spender and J. L. Gili. New York: Oxford University Press. $2.00.

FEDERICO GARCIA LORCA, some of whose works had been translated into English before the appearance of the present volume, was a young poet well known in Latin America as well as in his native Spain. Although placed, at the outbreak of the Civil War, under the protection of a group of Falangists in Granada, he was killed under obscure circumstances, possibly by persons who believed him hostile to the Nationalist cause. In any event, his death was considerably exploited by Leftist elements during the conflict. He has left behind him a very fine volume "Romancero Gitano," or Collection of Gipsy Ballads, and various works in verse for the theatre, besides poems of a highly personal, subjective character.

Positively a poet, he brings a sharp new note to Spanish verse; but at times his lines are spotty with strained *recherché* effects, obscure, and frequently of surrealist imagery, indicative of audacity and youth. As the present anthology reveals, his morality is occasionally crude; nevertheless, he has written poems obviously Catholic in tone and background.

Lorca can hardly be called a popular poet, although an element of popular and lyrical fantasy sings through his verses. Vivid pictorial impressions and quick stabs of sentiment point to a kinship with Japanese prints and short oriental verse, as in his vignette of an Andalusian village and of the image of the Virgin of Solitude borne in procession through the city. Over-rapid reaches of metaphor and reckless transference of symbolism, however, often make his thought and emotional patterns vacuous or at least difficult to follow.

The English translation, covering a representative selection, from simple ballads of childhood to flamboyant impressions of New York, stays faithfully with word and verse, but the music and perfume of the Spanish, happily made available in the text on the opposite pages, remain pretty much in the cadences originally limned by the poet. JAMES A. MAGNER.

The World's Great Catholic Poetry, compiled by Thomas Walsh. New York: The Macmillan Company. $1.69.

A NEW EDITION after many years of Mr. Walsh's excellent and full anthology, issued at a lower price, certainly merits renewed welcome. George N. Shuster has selected additional poems by both Catholic and non-Catholic poets to bring the book thoroughly up to date, and the publishers have provided biographical data on all the authors represented in the whole work. The anthology is still most unusual for its breadth, for the "Catholic Poems by Non-Catholic Poets," and for the number of translations, especially from the Spanish and Portuguese.

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Fifteenth Anniversary

It is, one hopes, the privilege of an institution, however modest in position, to abandon on special occasions the modesty suitable for individuals. The Commonweal's fifteenth birthday—the accomplishment of a span of rare years: unprecedented boom and unique depression landing in the most threatening season any man alive has ever seen—makes a big occasion for the magazine, altogether special. On this anniversary the publication pays tribute to its founders and supporters, and turns once more to friends. The greetings The Commonweal receives now from friends are good to share. They point to many purposes the magazine has tried to serve. They clarify the rôle it attempts to play among American publications. They display the good will of readers on which The Commonweal is based and on which, it seems to us, the country can base more general hopes. With intelligent and inspiring discernment they point to creative ends for this paper. Very evidently these greetings do, truth forces The Commonweal to admit, magnify the magazine's fulfillment of its ends beyond present deserts, and say things it would be embarrassing to say in the first person (even plural). With sincere appreciation we print these letters, determine to live up increasingly to the portraits—with garlands—kindly sketched by eminent and respected friends of The Commonweal, and genuine leaders of American life.—The Editors.

I CONGRATULATE THE COMMONWEAL on the completion of fifteen years of publication as a review of literature, the arts and public affairs. I am heartened by the assurance in your letter of October 11 that your magazine has felt compelled even more urgently in these troublous times to insist upon the American traditions of freedom from racial and religious prejudices in public and personal life.

In the conflict between principle and policy which unhappily arrays nation against nation today in armed conflict there is a lesson for us. It is that we must bear witness with increased resolution to our abiding faith in the institutions of democracy upon which we have built the structure of American life. At all hazards we must preserve our liberties and above all else, liberty of conscience. God speed you through the years in your determination to affirm the Christian conception of the dignity of the individual man. FRANKLIN D. ROOSEVELT,

The White House, Washington.

MY CONGRATULATIONS and best wishes for the continued success of THE COMMONWEAL which this month is celebrating fifteen years of a useful existence.

THE COMMONWEAL has attained its greatest importance in Catholic circles but is also well known and respected in nonsectarian groups as a weekly review of literature, the arts and public affairs. May I express the hope that its success will continue.

HERBERT H. LEHMAN.

Executive Chamber, Albany.

GEORGE N. SHUSTER

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I TAKE pleasure in felicitating you on the fifteenth anniversary of THE COMMONWEAL.

The great political, economic and religious issues of our times get relief and perspective through the press. The reaction and pulse of the reading public is also recorded in the press. Since there is a consequent philosophy and morality involved in these issues, it is self evident that an orthodox, fearless and competent Catholic press is imperative. THE COMMONWEAL was born of this conviction.

For its future years, may it continue true to its vocation and grow as it so continues. ✠ JOHN J. CANTWELL,
Archbishop of Los Angeles.

I AM glad to have your letter of October 2, 1939, reminding me that within a few weeks THE COMMONWEAL will celebrate its fifteenth anniversary. The influence that THE COMMONWEAL has attained and the character and quality of the articles that have appeared in its columns must be ample compensation to its collaborators for the difficulties and struggles that have marked its course.

When we consider that more than eighty reputable Catholic papers and reviews established in this century have had to discontinue publication, and when we consider that many of these are a distinct loss to the Church, it is evident that we Catholics are not yet giving proper support to the Catholic press. Pope Pius X declared that it was true in his time—and it most certainly is true in ours—that the Christian people are consistently deceived, poisoned and corrupted by the product of an impious press; and every Catholic would do well to examine his conscience in the light of the words of the same saintly Pontiff: "To be a Catholic, to call oneself a Catholic, nay, to belong to Catholic organizations and associations and at the same time be indifferent to the interests of the Catholic press is a patent absurdity."

Very best wishes to THE COMMONWEAL and a prayer that its arm may be strengthened more and more in the cause to which it is pledged. ✠ EDWARD D. HOWARD,
Archbishop of Portland in Oregon.

PLEASE ACCEPT my congratulations and good wishes on the occasion of THE COMMONWEAL'S fifteenth birthday. One does not have to find himself in agreement at all times with either the editorial policy of THE COMMONWEAL or the views of its contributors to appreciate its worth as a highly useful vehicle for the expression of sincere and cultured Catholic lay opinion on questions of the day, and therefore to bespeak for it a widening circle of readers. ✠ EDWARD MOONEY,
Archbishop of Detroit.

ON THE occasion of the fifteenth anniversary of THE COMMONWEAL, I am happy to extend sincerest felicitations.

During these fifteen years THE COMMONWEAL has maintained its high standard of excellence. They have been truly fruitful years, and it is an inspiring thought that this publication has exerted so extensive an influence for good.

I am certain that the staff of THE COMMONWEAL will be encouraged to carry on its laudable work in spite of the many difficulties that may arise. In the important field of Catholic journalism there is need of competent and experienced lay leaders, especially in these critical times when the interests of religion and the welfare of human society must be valiantly defended.

✠ HENRY ALTHOFF,
Bishop of Belleville.

MY CONGRATULATIONS and felicitations to the fifteen-year-old COMMONWEAL! This review has well maintained its literary excellence and has commanded the thoughtful consideration of leaders in public affairs.

We recognize that the man in the street is intrigued by the lay journalist. It is for the layman to show the wholesomeness of the Christian leaven in society.

Refreshing and well for the world, for us all, it is, to have spread in print, to read and consult the frank and considered convictions of cultured laymen who are found intensely concerned about, but not wholly immersed in, the world's affairs.

That THE COMMONWEAL may obtain the support which it has well earned and so multiply its usefulness is my very earnest wish and prayer. ✠ J. A. DUFFY,
Titular Bishop of Silando.

MANY PERSONS in positions of responsibility are alarmed in these days over the strange new thoughts and experiments proposed to govern human society. We hear force announced as the fundamental and ultimate principle to govern the human race. We hear militarism preached as a national virtue to which all youth should submit. We are told some races possess supreme culture and minorities less favored must surrender their natural rights or undergo punishment.

Many strange theories both in political and religious life are boldly proclaimed for the so-called new epoch, though neither reason nor tradition nor the common will of the common people are advanced to sustain either the justice or the reasonableness of the theories.

In such a situation, there is need of calmness, patience, an open field of expression and, above all, no prejudice or passion. We must analyze these new ideas and theories; throw the light of reason on them; distinguish between the right and the wrong, the true and the false, exposing by pure logic the sophisms and holding fast to what is best for the common good.

The best crucible in which to separate the gold from the dross is the magazine. THE COMMONWEAL represents the Catholic contribution to common thought. On this, the occasion of its fifteenth anniversary, I wish to extend my congratulations on its long record of service to truth and sound living. It is truly named as it has contributed sanely and courageously to the common weal of both Church and State.

You deserve a wider circulation and a generous support from Catholics. ✠ JOHN MARK GANNON,
Bishop of Erie.

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I HAVE been informed that THE COMMONWEAL will celebrate its fifteenth anniversary in the near future and I most heartily extend my congratulations to the founder, editor and staff of your magazine which, during those years, furnished the American readers news of public affairs—news clothed with the wealth of true philosophy and dignified with lofty and noble culture.

THE COMMONWEAL is written in a scholarly manner by men who know the worth of truth and the serenity of wisdom and the supernatural basis of morality.

Our culture is somewhat superficial today and our knowledge sometimes dangerous because it has its basis on false principles. THE COMMONWEAL has always promoted whatever is best in culture, whatever is dignified in art, whatever is vital in the news of public affairs and whatever is democratic in government.

Some philosopher of old said: "Books are our teachers." But how few read books these days. In our day we may say that magazines are our teachers. Truly, your magazine, THE COMMONWEAL, has been selected by our educators and philosophers as the best teacher and many of our American citizens have wisely selected it as a true teacher in the field of literature, art, science and public affairs.

I sincerely hope that the American reading public will select THE COMMONWEAL as their teacher during the next fifteen years. If they do, they will be secure in their philosophy and they are building up a culture which is so needed in American life today.

May the Divine Teacher of mankind guide you and all the staff of THE COMMONWEAL as teachers of the American public for many years to come. All good wishes and in union of prayer. ✠ JAMES A. GRIFFIN,
Bishop of Springfield in Illinois.

CONGRATULATIONS to the staff of THE COMMONWEAL on their fifteenth anniversary. One of our major needs in this country is the development of an articulate Catholic laity who understand the mind of the Church and have the capacity to convey it to the minds of our fellow citizens. Vast changes with implications that are religious and social confront us today. A new order is being built and THE COMMONWEAL has done much to bring forward our philosophy of life as the only safe foundation upon which to build this new and better order. May you continue to be a tower of strength to Church and state. ✠ ROBERT E. LUCEY,
Bishop of Amarillo.

ALLOW ME to join the host of friends of THE COMMONWEAL to offer my heartiest congratulations on your fifteenth anniversary in the field of Catholic lay journalism.

THE COMMONWEAL has stood the test of one of the most trying periods of Catholic journalism. Although it could not hope to put itself in accord on all points with the social, economic and political opinions of its readers, it succeeded in maintaining a high level of decorum and decency in discussing controversial subjects.

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THE SIMPLE, terse language used expresses the author's thought clearly. An elementary knowledge of Philosophy is all that is required for an adequate understanding of this impressively useful book, by an author whose previous books have made him a friend of a wide circle of readers. They will welcome this new work by Father Schuyler.

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The lay apostolate of the Catholic press has not yet reached in our country the full status of its powers. May I express the hope that THE COMMONWEAL will ever be a school for the development of a high type of Catholic journalist who will win the admiration and respect of friend and foe alike. God bless your undertaking.

✠ALOISIUS J. MUENCH,
Bishop of Fargo.

HAVING LEARNED that THE COMMONWEAL will observe its fifteenth anniversary next month, I hasten to send my greetings and congratulations.

When THE COMMONWEAL was launched I hailed the enterprise as the beginning of excellent lay cooperation with the clergy for the defense of Catholic teaching and its application to current problems. Over the years THE COMMONWEAL, on the whole, did a good job despite the struggle it had to wage to preserve its very existence.

For a time the editors seemed to have been slightly deceived, as most other editors were greatly deceived, by the powerful agencies which controlled news at its source in certain countries of Europe.

In the light of what happened two months ago, when the entire world discovered itself to have been a victim of the intrigue of pro-Communist and anti-Fascist propaganda, those who differed from your editors will not likely continue to harbor any resentment. You will always be safe when you have the mind of the Catholic Hierarchy at large which, in its totality, cannot well be deceived. I wish you greater patronage and, therefore, greater prosperity than you have ever enjoyed.

✠JOHN F. NOLL,
Bishop of Fort Wayne.

IF I were asked to quote the striking sentences which I recall best, I would include the sentence from the Encyclical, "free competition is dead, economic dictatorship has taken its place." I do not know of a more terse, prophetic and true statement.

I read THE COMMONWEAL more perhaps than for any other reason to be further inspired and informed as to the steps which we should take to practically apply the principles of brotherhood to the solution of our economic problem so concisely stated above.

Your editors plainly have the vision of building a brotherhood here on this earth. Your contributors offer practical recommendations to that end. I like both what is said and how it is said.

You are to be highly congratulated in constantly holding the torch of brotherhood higher and in pointing out more plainly the ways to reach that goal. I am sure that your coming years will contribute even greater service to that end. Hearty congratulations and encouragement.

E. R. BOWEN.
General Secretary, The Cooperative League.

THE COMMONWEAL on its fifteenth birthday is vigorously old and wise in its thinking and its conclusions about the world problem of employer-employee relations. It has denounced economic domination with its trail of poverty and misery, condemned it as radically as the limitations of the English language permit, as radically as did Pope Pius XI.

It has recommended remedies for the injustices that make life hard to live, insisting that these treatments be well within the moral law. Loving justice, it has hated iniquity. It has found collective bargaining good but knows that collective bargaining is no insurance against differences of opinions. It has described the efficacy of the conference method, of mediation, of arbitration when such disputes arise. In all of this it has been an inspiration and a source of consolation to thousands.

I rejoice over this opportunity to admire, to congratulate, to encourage so spirited a defender of Holy Mother Church.

REV. JOHN P. BOLAND,
Chairman, New York State Labor Relations Board.

SINCE ITS inception THE COMMONWEAL has been an outstanding journal, a forum in which Catholic thought has been presented on a wide variety of subjects by a galaxy of authors.

In the face of economic breakdown, maldistribution of the national income and mass unemployment, COMMONWEAL has presented with vigor and clarity the social principles laid down in the labor encyclicals of Popes Leo XIII and Pius XI. If Catholics are to be worthy children of the Church, they must now as never before live and teach these great principles. Apathy in the face of social wrong sins against justice and is a crime against the Church.

By emphasizing the immediate, pressing need of a new awakening to our social obligations, THE COMMONWEAL becomes an exponent of Catholic Action on the most important front of the day. On its fifteenth anniversary, I salute THE COMMONWEAL as a great champion of Christian ethics.

JOHN BROPHY,
Committee for Industrial Organization.

IT IS a pleasure to learn from your letter that THE COMMONWEAL is already fifteen years of age. I read it regularly and with appreciation for its careful and thoughtful interpretation of happenings in this complicated and troubled world of ours.

Best wishes for the years to come.

NICHOLAS MURRAY BUTLER,
President of Columbia University.

THE NATIONAL Conference of Christians and Jews extends to THE COMMONWEAL its hearty congratulations and good wishes on the occasion of its fifteenth anniversary. THE COMMONWEAL has rendered distinguished service to the cause of religion in the United States, and by its balanced judgment of the news of the day and its interpretation of it in the light of a religious conscience has won the confidence of thoughtful people from far beyond the circle of its Roman Catholic constituency. Among both Protestants and Jews THE COMMONWEAL has reduced fears of Catholicism, and increased the appreciation of the objectives and values of the Roman Catholic Church in the United States. In matters of concern to the maintenance of wholesome

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relations among the religious and racial groups that compose our citizenship its influence has been consistently upon the side of understanding, justice and mutual consideration and respect. It would be difficult to exaggerate the significance of such an attitude in the perplexing and troubled days through which we are passing.

EVERETT R. CLINCHY,
Director, The National Conference of Christians and Jews.

ONE OF the most heartening aspects of the Catholic scene in the United States is provided by the fifteen-year career of THE COMMONWEAL and its vigorous, alert contribution today to an understanding of the problems that face Church and country. Congratulations to those who have made and are making it such a powerful weapon for truth and justice.

JOHN B. COLLINS,
Editor, The Pittsburgh Catholic.

CONGRATULATIONS to THE COMMONWEAL on its fifteenth birthday. It has fulfilled in a splendid way the promises it made with its first issue. Keep up the good work. WILLIAM COLLINS,
New York Representative, AFL.

IN THE name of the staff of *The Catholic Worker*, Peter Maurin, Adé Béthune, William Callahan, Joe Zarrella, Gerald Griffin and Edward Priest, I write to assure you of our prayers on your fifteenth anniversary. We are grateful to you for all the pioneering work you have done in the past, and for all the help the editors personally and through their columns have given us.

You remember that Peter Maurin always says that it is the duty of the journalist to make history as well as record it. May THE COMMONWEAL continue to have the influence on its times that it has had in the past.

DOROTHY DAY.
The Catholic Worker.

THE COMMONWEAL is the representative of liberal Catholic thought in this country. It is performing an indispensable service to America and to liberals everywhere. ROBERT M. HUTCHINS,
President of the University of Chicago.

HEARTIEST congratulations to THE COMMONWEAL. We Protestants very much need it. I find it always informing, inspiring and eminently fair. It displays an inclusive and a courageous spirit.

BENSON Y. LANDIS,
Associate Secretary, Department of Research and Education, Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America.

INSTEAD of saying "congratulations" on your fifteenth anniversary, I'd like to murmur instead a fervent "thank you."

I thank you principally for the "open door"—sometimes I have the uneasy feeling that THE COMMONWEAL

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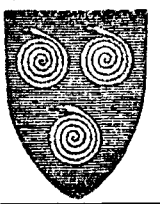

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and the *Catholic Worker* are the only "open doors" we have.

Every time I pick up THE COMMONWEAL, I see the Catholic perspective as Newman saw it: a progressive search for truth which expands the horizons of our thinking.

In a day when most of us are tempted to barricade our Catholic thought behind great Chinese walls and route the traffic of our minds in narrow little streets, THE COMMONWEAL stands out like a cheery shout from Saint Paul. It annihilates the barricades.

How many of our magazines can say with THE COMMONWEAL that it has no "sacred cows," that there is no topic which men of good spirit may not debate in its pages?

I thank you especially for Father Flower's magnificent sketch of Abbot Oswald a few weeks ago. It seems to me the Abbot and THE COMMONWEAL were well met: two people who liked the best of both worlds!

EMMET LAVERY.

PLEASE ACCEPT my congratulations and good wishes on THE COMMONWEAL'S fifteenth birthday. I have been an attentive and admiring reader almost from the very beginning and, as time has gone on, an ever more interested reader. THE COMMONWEAL is now an indispensable American Journal, for the deeper problems which confront mankind today are, it seems to me, unintelligible and insoluble except by an understanding of that universal tradition which THE COMMONWEAL represents.

WALTER LIPPMANN,
The New York Herald Tribune.

ON ITS fifteenth anniversary I wish to congratulate THE COMMONWEAL on the high standard it has set and maintained. It has made a distinguished place for itself in the intellectual life of this country. I respect its inquiring mind, its awareness of social change and its fidelity to fixed principles. It is Catholic in the best sense, alive to the issues of our time as well as to the issues of all time. May it live long and prosper!

ANNE O'HARE MCCORMICK,
The New York Times.

MY HEARTIEST congratulations to THE COMMONWEAL. You are doing a splendid job in espousing the cause of social justice on the course marked out by Leo Thirteenth.

FRANK MURPHY.
Attorney-General.

I READ THE COMMONWEAL faithfully every week, not from a sense of duty, but because THE COMMONWEAL is so interesting that I neglect my regular work in order to read it. It is a thoroughly high class periodical, broadminded, intelligent, both shrewd and spiritual. I wish it were a visitor in every home in America.

WILLIAM LYON PHELPS,
Yale University.

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MUCH OF the European scene presents an alignment of materialistic and pagan forces against religion. If America is to maintain its soul it must uphold its Biblical religious tradition. In the face of the menace to religion that is spreading over, and from, Europe, the exponents of the Jewish-Christian religious tradition have to use every means of instruction for bringing and holding their message before the American people. Therefore, the function of a review such as THE COMMONWEAL is today a far more significant and valuable one than it was fifteen years ago when this paper was founded.

May it long continue to contribute towards strengthening the religious soul of America.

DAVID DE SOLA POOL.
Rabbi, Spanish and Portuguese Synagogue, New York.

I AM happy to learn that the fifteenth anniversary of THE COMMONWEAL will be signalized by a celebration. Let me congratulate you and the other members of the staff as well as the Catholics of the United States on the fact that THE COMMONWEAL has lasted for fifteen years and particularly on the fact that its recent experience has been so favorable as to justify this specific observance. In my opinion, the magazine has improved with the passing of the years and its prospects, happily, seem less precarious today than in any preceding period of its history.

RT. REV. JOHN A. RYAN,
Director, Department of Social Action, NCWC.

PERMIT ME to extend my hearty congratulations to THE COMMONWEAL on its fifteenth anniversary. I read it right along and it is not only entertaining but it is highly instructive.

Best wishes for many more anniversaries.

ALFRED E. SMITH.

THE FIRST fifteen years are the hardest, and I hope THE COMMONWEAL will weather the problems of maturity as successfully as it has withstood the trials of youth. It speaks well for its quality, its temper and its breadth of view that it has readers of all creeds and of no creed. It has made a real contribution to the endless struggle against intolerance, ignorance and religious complacency. I am happy to congratulate THE COMMONWEAL on its fifteenth aniversary and to wish that it may keep on growing and prospering for many years to come.

ARTHUR HAYS SULZBERGER,
Publisher, The New York Times.

I DESIRE to offer my congratulations and felicitations to THE COMMONWEAL on its fifteenth anniversary. I trust that the splendid work of this most useful publication will continue. We need publications of this kind in order to give expression to the attitude of Catholic laymen on the economic and social questions confronting the people of America in this, the most dangerous period in world history.

I trust THE COMMONWEAL will never advocate separation of Catholics in separate unions, such as obtains

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in European countries, and such as prevails under the guidance and direction of the Archbishop of Quebec. Catholic members of unions usually are successful in convincing the others in the unions as to the sincerity and purpose of the Catholic Church. Catholic laymen, as well as the Catholic priesthood of our country, must realize that we are the only large nation in the world embracing in its citizenship millions of Catholics who are free to exercise our religious beliefs. Catholic publications, speaking for Catholic laymen and for the Catholic Church, should beware of what is happening in other countries and should take warning before it is too late that "it can happen here." Before Hitler and Stalin decided to destroy religion, they first destroyed the organizations of the workers, the Trade Union Movement. After they destroyed the workers' economic organizations, they then began to destroy all kinds of religion. While not entirely successful in the beginning, after the passing of the present generation religion will be destroyed if the present Dictators of European countries continue to prevail.

The work that THE COMMONWEAL can do in this direction is invaluable and extremely necessary at this time. Warn our Catholic people to beware of what may happen to us in this country, because it seems to me that if the Church is destroyed, civilization will eventually be destroyed and we will return to the age of the survival only of the monsters whose reign will be based on lust and power.

Congratulations to THE COMMONWEAL on its fifteenth anniversary.

DANIEL J. TOBIN,
General President, International Brotherhood of Teamsters and Chauffeurs.

I WELCOME the opportunity to extend my best wishes on the occasion of the fifteenth anniversary of THE COMMONWEAL.

My high regard for THE COMMONWEAL is based not only upon its understanding and sound presentation of the problems of farmers but upon its efforts in behalf of progress for all the people. I have been especially impressed by the way in which this magazine has attempted to interpret the two great encyclicals, *Rerum Novarum* and *Quadragesimo Anno,* as they apply to the social and economic problems of the present day.

HENRY A. WALLACE,
Secretary of Agriculture.

AS ONE of the (minor) obstetricians attendant at THE COMMONWEAL's birth, fifteen years ago, I am happy to add my congratulations and good wishes on the anniversary it celebrates. As an organ for expression of the Catholic laymen's thinking—and a forum for ventilation those disagreements among us in the *dubia* where *libertas* was commended by the great medieval masters—it has made for itself a place in Catholic intellectual life, and long may it fill it!

THOMAS WOODLOCK.
The Wall Street Journal.

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The Inner Forum

THE CONCENTRATION of American Catholics in our largest cities is widely held to bode ill for the future of the Church in the United States. Not only the numbers, for urban families are not large enough to maintain the population even at a stationary level, but the calibre of Catholic family life are badly impaired. The problem is well outlined by Reverend Henry J. Palmer in "The Parish of Tomorrow" in the current issue of the *Preservation of the Faith* magazine. Father Palmer recognizes that the heart of the difficulty is the lack of genuine parish life.

Not that there is a dearth of parish activities; quite the contrary. But "the reason why there are really no true parishes functioning as they should, is because we have lost the basis of parish life . . . the community. . . . In modern city life there are no communities. The natural bond of neighborliness is gone. The spirit of the apartment house reigns supreme. Thirty or forty families live under the same roof for years and never know the name of their next door neighbor." Home is just a place to sleep and eat in. Man in the modern metropolis seldom exercises the God-given prerogative of freedom of intelligent and deliberate choice.

Father Palmer makes a series of suggestions for revitalizing parish life even in an unpromising urban environment. To meet the difficulty of the unwieldy size of many parishes he advances the need of the type of census which not only establishes personal contact with all the people in the parish but also goes into the social and economic conditions of every family, in addition to spiritual conditions. Closely akin to this is the building up of consciousness of fellow-parishioners' needs, with neighbors eager to have a share in the all-important Corporal and Spiritual Works of Mercy. Parish Houses of Hospitality should be everywhere established.

Other parish organizations suggested by Father Palmer to meet the needs of the times are: Parish Workers Alliances for the unemployed; parish units of the Association of Catholic Trade Unionists; credit unions; fireside crafts; cooperative stores, which might well serve the whole neighborhood; study groups on home nursing, hygiene and infant training (maternity guilds might be mentioned in this connection); groups preparing to settle on the land or to form Catholic communities in the suburbs. He would place the emphasis on adult education. "What is the use of keeping our children locked up in our parochial schools for five hours a day, teaching them religion out of a book for half an hour and then turning them loose onto the city streets for the rest of the day, where they drink in with every breath the vapor of paganism, without any counteracting good influence from a good home or good natural community life."

The late Dom Virgil Michel, O.S.B., approached the parish problem from a somewhat similar angle in an article just published in *Orate Fratres*. Dom Virgil had found these suggestions of Pius Parsch in *Bibel und Liturgie*. On the positive side he mentions three kinds of natural (as distinguished from supernatural) pastoral activity. "Each one must develop the graces received by the individual cooperation of his own efforts. And so

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